





STRAND PRICE

This Book is presented Jennie Laurson for regular attendance at The Presbyterian Sunday School during the year 1890 Christmas.





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"The page came forward and knelt down." [See p. 7.]

# THE PRINCESS LILIWINKINS

### AND OTHER STORIES

BY

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### The Princess Liliwinkins.

LISTEN to the story of the Princess Liliwinkins. She lived at her father's court, and was treated with the greatest respect by every one because of her high rank; but she was not always happy, because it was the law of that land that the royal children should never be allowed to play, and so the little girl was often very lonesome.

Once in a great while she teased her nurse to let her go blackberrying all by herself in the royal blackberry-fields, and then she would play that every berry was a little girl, and be very happy with so many companions to tell her thoughts to—for of these she had many. There was nothing that she did not have her own ideas about, and having so many ideas made her seem to herself a very wise child. She was sure she knew much more about a great many things than any of her elders; but no one would believe that, so she kept it all to herself.

She had a pet fawn to which she whispered her thoughts about the trees and birds and flowers, for she rightly guessed that he knew all about such things; but as for other matters, she never spoke a word of them to any one. She had tutors and governesses innumerable, but after the lessons of the day were over, she used to go off quite alone by herself and laugh over the silly things her teachers had told her.

As, for instance, that the fawn could not understand her; that the brook never told her stories of its home up among the hills, and that the stars were so far apart they could not see one another.

Liliwinkins had to learn many long, weary lessons out of dull, stupid books, but she managed to keep happy by forgetting them all very soon; and by carefully repeating to herself all the things she had found out without books, she came to have quite a store of knowledge.

On her seventh birthday something very important happened. She was awakened in the morning by a great noise and commotion in the palace, and sat up in bed and rubbed her eyes, and wondered what could have happened. Then she remembered that it was her birthday, and thought perhaps they were preparing a grand surprise for her.

But very soon her old nurse came in with a very sorrowful face, and told her she must get up and be dressed, for the King was dead. Liliwinkins was very much frightened when she heard this, because she did not know what it meant, but supposed, from the nurse's manner, it must be something very terrible indeed; and she had always been rather fond of the old man who she had always been told was her father, and who used to smile very kindly upon her when she chanced to meet him and made her grave little courtesy, and said, "Good-morning, your majesty." But now he was dead, whatever that might mean, and she wondered if some other old man would come to the palace instead, and live in the beautiful rooms, and sit upon the king's golden throne.

But when she asked the nurse if this would be so, the nurse said, oh, no, indeed! for now that his majesty was dead, Liliwinkins herself would be Queen and rule over all the land.

Liliwinkins was very much surprised to learn this, and, wise as she thought herself, wondered if some man could not be found who would know better how to rule the kingdom than such a little girl; but she said nothing of this, being so used to keeping her thoughts to herself; and she had no doubt it would be very great fun to sit upon the golden throne and wear the beautiful jewelled crown that she so much admired.

For three days no one said anything to her about being Queen, for they were all very busy with burying the King and deciding who should be Regent; but on the morning of the fourth day the nurse came to her and said that all the lords and ladies of the court were waiting to see her in the throne-room.

Liliwinkins was sadly annoyed at this, and began to pout, for she had decided to go that day and stay all the morning in the fields with her fawn.

But the nurse told her that this would never do, for, now that she was Queen, she would never be allowed to go anywhere alone; and, above all, she could never go blackberrying again, for that was something that queens never did. And then she showed her a beautiful satin dress trimmed with swan's down, and embroidered with pearls, and told her that she was to wear this dress and sit upon the golden throne, and be crowned.

This pleased Liliwinkins so much that she quite gave up the idea of going blackberrying, and consented to be taken down to the throne-room. Here she found a great assemblage of princes and princesses from all over the country. Among them were many noble-looking men and

beautiful ladies, and the little girl felt very timid and shy when all these grand personages bowed down so very low before her, and treated her with such great respect.

One of these noblemen had been chosen Regent, and he now came forward and escorted Liliwinkins to the throne, and then stood by her side and read a long, long paper, during which time the young Queen kept herself from going to sleep by industriously counting the number of jewels in his sword-belt.

When he was through he looked at Liliwinkins, who smiled at him very prettily, being very glad he had stopped. Now was the time for her to recite that long piece that her Wisest Tutor had been so busy teaching her for the past three days, but as she had only thought it was part of her regular lessons, she had speedily forgotten it, as was her rule, and could not imagine why every one looked at her so strangely.

At last the Regent said, "Will the Queen please make her desires known unto us?" He looked so very stern and angry that poor Liliwinkins became very much frightened, and would have spoiled the grand ceremony by a fit of tears if one of the beautiful ladies, seeing how matters stood, had not come forward and laid her hand soothingly upon her head. "You know what to

say, dear, do you not?" she whispered. "Tell him what you wish for yourself and the kingdom."

Liliwinkins brightened at once. She turned to the Regent and cried, joyously, "Oh, if you please, your Highness, I should like hot cakes every day for breakfast, and not to have my tutors and governesses teach me things that are not true, and to have all the queens all over the world go blackberrying whenever they want to." At this there was a great commotion; several of the ladies fainted, and many gentlemen drew their swords, and the Regent scowled terrifically; but the beautiful lady who was standing by the throne smiled at Liliwilkins quite tenderly, as if she felt sorry for the poor little Queen, and one silly little page, who had not been long at court, giggled so much that he had to hide his face in his pocket-handkerchief.

Seeing all the trouble, the Wisest Tutor came forward and said that as the Queen had forgotten her speech perhaps his Highness would allow her to read it, and to this the Regent consented, for he had written the speech himself and was very desirous that all the lords and ladies should hear it.

So Liliwinkins stood up and read the long paper so prettily, and pronounced all the big words

so well, that the Regent was very much pleased and called her Gracious Majesty the next time he spoke to her.

Then, as was the custom in that country, the Keeper of the Seal brought down from the secret tower the great Book of the Kings in which Liliwinkins was to write her name, and the Regent being offended at the little page who had giggled, commanded him to kneel and hold the book while the Queen read all the acts of her father's reign and signed her name at the end to show that she was the next sovereign.

The page came forward and knelt down and received the book, and then all the lords and ladies left the room, for it was the law that the Queen must be quite alone while reading.

Now no sooner had Liliwinkins's eyes fallen upon the pages of this book than she perceived that it was the most beautiful object she had ever seen. The leaves were of heavy sheepskin, as smooth and lustrous as satin; the letters were of silver, and the pictures wrought in blue and gold, while all the margins were covered with exquisite designs in gold and jewels. She turned over page after page in wonder and admiration, looking at the portraits of the kings and queens who had reigned before, and enchanted with the gorgeous display of birds and flowers; for when-

ever a rare or beautiful bird or flower was brought into this kingdom by travellers from abroad, a picture of it was immediately placed in the King's Book; and, as all the pictures were made of gold and silver and bronze and precious stones, the effect was indeed magnificent. Liliwinkins gazed and gazed at this treasure of a book, until she was startled by a deep sigh from the little page, whose arms had begun to ache badly.

"Dear me, you must be tired," she said to him; "just put it down on the floor and we will look at it together."

The page was quite willing to do this, and the two children sat there and examined and admired the beautiful book until Liliwinkins was sure that she knew every picture by heart.

Then she climbed upon the golden throne, and, motioning the page to sit down on a low hassock near, began to examine him with as much interest as she had looked at the pictures. She saw that his eyes were brown while hers were blue, that his curls were also brown while hers were golden, and that his dress was of dark crimson velvet, while hers was of violet satin. Then she began to talk to him.

"What do you know?" she asked.

The little page leaned his head upon his hands and thought for a long time. He knew a great, great many things, but he thought they were not of a kind that would interest the Queen. He could have told her very interesting things about his life up among the northern mountains, of his six big strong brothers and their perilous adventures with bears and wolves, or of his own excursions in the forest after rabbits and squirrels, or up among the cliffs after birds' eggs and eider-down; and, thinking of all these things, and of the gentle lady, his mother, who had cried when word was brought that the old king desired her little son at court, he sighed again and said nothing. At this Liliwinkins grew impatient.

"Bah! you know nothing," she said, "or, at least, you only know as much as my tutors and governesses."

The little page blushed with shame. What did he know that a girl could understand? At last he said, timidly, "I know hide-and-seek."

"What is that?" asked Liliwinkins, "is it anything in a book?"

"No, indeed," said the page.

"Well, then," cried Liliwinkins, "tell it to me immediately."

Whereupon he explained the mysteries of this fascinating game to the little Queen, who was so charmed that she declared they must play it at once. But the page said that first the Queen

ought to write her name in the King's Book. So Liliwinkins sat down on the floor and leaned over the page where her father's name was written, and after some moments spent in thought declared that she could not possibly write her name there, as there were no lines to write upon.

The page said he could write straight without any lines; and then the little girl begged him to write her name for her, as she knew she would surely make it run up and down. To this he agreed, but it seemed to him such an important thing to write in the King's Book that he quite forgot to write the Queen's name, but wrote his own instead, without ever knowing it, and there it stood right under the King's name. Prince Allola. It was written very nicely, and after the little boy had looked at it until he was satisfied, he said he was ready to play.

Certainly there could not have been chosen a better place for the game, for the throne-room abounded in queer nooks and unexpected recesses which, with the beautiful curtains and large pieces of heavy furniture, made the nicest hiding-places that could possibly be imagined.

They played for a long time, and their shouts of laughter might easily have been heard outside, but no one seemed to notice them, for the reason that the Regent had commanded every one to leave that part of the palace, so that the Queen might be quite undisturbed while reading the King's Book.

Although the little page had played the game many times before, it was Liliwinkins who found out the securest hiding-places, and once when she squeezed herself under a large ottoman, and once when she climbed into a cabinet that hung on the wall, she had to come out and show herself at last, for he could not find her at all.

But in the midst of the game, just as Liliwinkins had congratulated herself on finding the very best hiding-place of all, the door opened, and the Regent walked solemnly and majestically into the room. And what did he see! The King's Book lying open on the floor with its beautiful pictures exposed to the dust, the little page standing on tiptoe peering down into a great bronze vase to see if Liliwinkins were there, and Liliwinkins herself snugly ensconced under the very throne itself, with her eyes full of mischief, and her golden crown all askew on top of her curls.

At this sight the Regent gave such a terrible shout of anger that all the court rushed in, thinking there had been an assassination. The little page hid himself behind the vase, and Liliwinkins crept out from under the throne and ran and hid her face in the dress of the beautiful lady who had taken her part before, and while every one stood trembling and wondering what could be the matter, the Regent pointed to the poor child and said, slowly and impressively,

"Ladies and gentlemen of the court, I found

the Queen playing."

At this dreadful intelligence all the court gazed in horror at Liliwinkins, until the beautiful lady felt so sorry for her that she just stooped down and gave her a kiss.

"She is such a child, your Highness," she said to the Regent; "I am sure you will forgive her."

But at this the Regent only got into a greater rage than before, and vowed that he would no longer keep the Great Seal, and said that they might choose another Regent, for he had been disgraced.

Then all the lords and ladies fell upon their knees, and besought him to have mercy upon the kingdom and save it from ruin. And after many tears and entreaties the Regent relented, and said he would forgive the Queen this time, but it must never happen again or he could not say what he would do; and Liliwinkins was so rejoiced to think that the trouble was over that she settled her crown joyously upon her head, and climbing up into the throne sat there smiling

at everybody. But the trouble was not quite over, for the Regent now ordered the King's Book to be carried back to the tower, and then turned around and began looking for the little page, who finally was brought trembling from behind the vase and stood before his Highness in great fear.

"You have been the means," said the Regent, very severely, "of my disgrace and the Queen's misbehavior; therefore I deem it right that you should be punished, and I command you for a year to wear your coat buttoned up in the back." The little page wept bitterly at this sentence, and wished he were back home again with his mother to comfort him; but it did no good, and he had to submit to the disgrace and wear his coat buttoned up in the back; and very uncomfortable it was, with the collar reaching up to his nose, and his arms so stiff and awkward. And, besides, strangers coming to the court always laughed at him; so he got into the habit of creeping off by himself, and climbing into the high tower, and looking up towards the mountains where his home was, where he used to be so happy with his mother and his six big brothers.

Now after a while a stranger passing that way carried the news of Allola's disgrace up to the

North, to his home among the frozen lakes. And no sooner had the six big brothers heard it than they stamped their big feet and shook their big swords, and vowed they would go straight to the court and make the Regent apologize for the insult to their brother.

And so the little page, looking north one day, saw a little white cloud moving over the mountains, and as he watched it, it came closer and closer, until he saw it was the plumes in his brothers' hats, and knew they had come down to his rescue.

He clapped his hands for joy, and then ran down to meet them and escort them to the Regent, who looked very much astonished when he saw these big brothers and their tremendous swords.

"Your Highness," said the biggest brother, "we have come down to see what this means." His voice was so loud and his manner so fierce that the Regent began to get a little frightened, and to think perhaps he had made a mistake in treating the little page so badly. He had no idea the brothers were so big and so strong. But he did not show his fear, and only said it would be impossible to answer any questions except in the presence of the court, as it was a state matter.

The big brothers then said the court would have to be called immediately, as they did not choose to wait. So the court came in, and all the ladies looked with admiration and all the gentlemen with respect at the six big brothers in their beautiful velvet suits, and with their great jewelled swords hanging by their sides.

Then the Regent explained that they had come down to ask why their brother had been punished. And, gaining courage at the sight of all his lords standing around him, he added, that the little page had been punished because he deserved it, and that was the end of it. At this the big brothers gave such roars of anger and waved their swords so fiercely that it almost seemed there was thunder and lightning in the room. The Regent and his lords also drew their swords, and there was a great commotion, in which every one might have been killed had not the little page suddenly been discovered standing upon the throne with his coat buttoned up before and his little hands stuck comfortably into his pockets. He had changed his coat as soon as his brothers drew their swords, knowing that they would protect him, and as he was afraid of being hurt in the mêlée that ensued, he jumped up on the throne as the safest place. But the Regent was horror-stricken to see a common page in

that royal seat, and, leaving his lords and the brothers to fight it out among themselves, went

up to the page and ordered him down.

This attracted the notice of the big brothers, who gathered around the throne and declared that Allola should stay there as long as he liked, and if no one but kings and queens had a right to occupy the throne, why, they would make him king right away, and send the little princess off to Quimbeatapetal.

On hearing this the Regent and his lords drew themselves up in a line in front of the big brothers and commanded them to leave the room.

To which the brothers replied that they would not, and ordered the keeper of the tower to bring the King's Book and let them see the Princess's name, for they did not believe she was queen at all.

The Regent now thought that his troubles were over, but when the book was opened there stood Allola's name right beneath the late King's, and the big brothers laughed heartily, thinking it was a magic sign that their little brother was to be king.

All the lords and ladies were very much impressed by this, and some of them agreed with the brothers, and some of them agreed with the Regent, and some of them said nothing, until at

last the Wisest Tutor came forward and said there would have to be a war to settle it.

Whereupon Allola cried out that he could explain it all in one minute, but no one paid any attention to him, and when the Wisest Tutor proposed that they should listen to the little page, they all laughed in his face, as they always did when he proposed things they did not like.

Now it was the custom in that country, whenever there was war, to have the cats and dogs fight all the battles, as this saved much powder and shot and also many useful lives.

So as soon as war was declared all the dogs were brought from the North and all the cats were brought from the South and fed on quantities of meat for three days, to make them fierce and warlike.

It was decided that there should be no more than three battles, so that there might be left enough cats and dogs to begin another war if one ever became necessary, and if the dogs won two of these battles then Allola would reign, but if the cats won two, then Liliwinkins would remain Queen. When the first day's fight was over, and the dead were counted, it was found that the dogs had won; whereupon the six big brothers were so delighted that they made themselves dukes. But on the second day it was

found the cats had won, and then the Regent made a proclamation that the big brothers were all to be beheaded the next day immediately after the battle, and this would surely have been done, had it not turned out that the dogs won again. And this ended the war, and thus Allola became king.

And then of course there was another coronation, and more speeches, in the midst of which Allola yawned and yawned, and grew so sleepy that it was with difficulty he could sit upright on the throne; but no one dared say a word, for there stood the big brothers all around him with their swords, and although they themselves would have preferred Allola to sit straight and keep his eyes open, they did not hint this to any one, for from his earliest years the little page had ruled his six big brothers absolutely, and it had always been the law of the house that he should be obeyed in everything; and as he was still only a child they were very much afraid that in the midst of this splendid coronation he would suddenly propose that they should all get down on their hands and knees and play bear or some other game; and, rough as they were, and unused to the manner of courts, they could not but think that this would have been highly improper, and so they thought it would be the wisest thing to let him go to sleep if he wanted to.

And all this while no one paid the least attention to Liliwinkins. She went here and there, just as she liked, and as she had never been allowed to do this before, she thought she was having the very nicest time she had ever had in all her life.

The night after the little page's coronation her nurse came as usual to put her to bed, and then she learned that she was no longer to be called *Royal Highness*, or any other title, but just plain Liliwinkins, for the war had proven that she was no more a princess than she had been a queen, and that, in fact, she was *nobody*.

She thought it very strange that she should not be *somebody*, but the nurse told her, no, that she was nobody at all, not even as much as a beggar.

This seemed so curious that she looked in the glass over the nurse's head to see if she had really changed to somebody else; but when she saw her own blue eyes and golden curls, she came to the conclusion that the nurse was only talking stupidly, as people did in books, and that she was really herself, and there was no occasion to worry about it.

Now, if Liliwinkins had not been such a very wise child she would, no doubt, have gone straight to sleep as soon as her nurse left her, and thought no more about royal highnesses. But her wisdom kept her awake. For as soon as she was alone in the dark she began to think of all the things she had ever read or heard of princes and princesses who had had wars and seen their thrones occupied by strange, and even silly little pages. And, think hard as she might, she could not recollect one dethroned prince who had been allowed to live happily and quietly, but all had been beheaded or put in dungeons, and this fate seemed so dismal that the poor little Queen could not help shedding some tears over it, turning over with her face in the pillow, and feeling very lonesome and heartsick. If she had only remembered all the history she had read, she might have been comforted by the thought that dethroned princes and princesses were not always treated badly; but this was one of the things she had forgotten, and as she lay there awake she decided that the best thing she could do would be to run away from this place where men did such cruel things, and so save herself from being beheaded or put into a dungeon.

So she got up and dressed herself and smoothed back her tumbled hair, and sat down by the window to think where she would go. She knew no one outside the palace in the whole wide world, which was a much larger place than she had ever believed. But as she looked out of the window over the moon-lit country all around, it seemed to her such a pretty world that she had no doubt she could find a place somewhere in it that would suit her very well.

Down in the court-yard there were deep shadows, and if she could only hide in them till she reached the gate it would be an easy matter to get away. She leaned out of the window and looked down. The roses in the corner sent up their delicious perfume to greet her, the lilies around the fountain nodded in a stately but kindly fashion, from a nest in a moon-lighted bush a wakeful bird piped a cheery note, and far beyond, the million leaves of the forest glistened like the spear-points of a protecting army. Liliwinkins had never seen the night before, having had to go promptly to bed always at seven, and now the beauty of it seemed wonderful to her. From the white earth below to the bright sky above, where the great clusters of stars shone, it was all a beautiful, brilliant, magical picture that filled her with gladness. She could not be afraid to go out into this beautiful night that the flowers and the birds seemed to love, and as she looked towards the west and saw a great fiery star that burned more brightly than the rest, she suddenly made up her mind that she would travel that way, and see if she could not come to it. It must be the Evening Star, she said to herself; she had heard of it, and she had heard of the Morning Star too, and had looked for it once or twice when she had been up very early, of course without seeing it; but it could not be as beautiful as this; and then, in great haste to be off on her journey lest she should be discovered, she crept softly down the staircase and out into the courtvard where the sentinel stood looking in at the open window in the hall, and keeping safe in the shadows she reached the gate, which was not vet barred, and, pushing it open a little way, she slipped through, and so stood outside, free. And thus this little Princess stole away from her palace, and went out through the night in search of the Evening Star. Outside the court-yard she found it delightful, and began her walk through the forest very happily. Numerous small living things flew before and around her, and it seemed that the woods were peopled with multitudes of friendly spirits that had come to wish her well on her journey. A great solemn owl looked down at her with its eyes full of wisdom, and a whip-poor-will called out loudly as she passed: but Liliwinkins minded neither one of them, being herself as wise as the owl, and not understanding in the least that the whip-poor-will might mean anything personal.

By and by, as she got farther away from the open country and entered the heart of the woods, she found that one by one her companions left her, and finally she was quite alone. But she was not afraid, for the voice of the deep forest was familiar and sweet to her, sounding like the song of the pines that bordered the little stream that led from the palace park up to the hill-country.

By the time she had reached the deepest and darkest part of the woods, where the moonlight only fell in little dancing bits and the stars shone not at all, she was so tired that she thought she would sit down and rest awhile. She found a nice bed of leaves and moss all ready for her at the foot of a big tree, and lying down, was soon asleep, and slept on and on, while the Evening Star glided down into the west, and so disappeared without even knowing there was such a person as Liliwinkins in the world.

When the little Queen awoke it was bright, broad daylight, and the forest was joyous with the sunshine of a new day. Liliwinkins sat up, rubbed her eyes, forgot all about the Evening Star, and wondered what she should do for breakfast. Berries there were none, and the nuts hung far above in close clusters that only the autumn frost might loosen. If Liliwinkins had been the

very first little girl ever born into this world she could not have known less how to set about getting her morning meal.

But while she sat there thinking, she heard a sound that gladdened her heart. A little merry tune came softly through the trees; a magic tune that one must hear first in childhood, if it is ever heard at all. A little song that is made up of bird-notes and hill-echoes, and the melodious voices of the summer meadows. As soon as Liliwinkins heard it she arose and followed its call, and so found her old friend the meadow brook, by whose side she and her fawn had spent many a happy hour, and which she felt sure had crept into the forest to be her companion and playfellow on her long journey.

She washed her face in its clear waters and drank a sparkling draught of it with her two hands for a cup, and gathered some of the cardinal-flowers that grew on its banks, and then, trusting to its guidance, she followed its winding course through the forest, feeling sure that such an old friend could not but lead her safely.

A mile or so farther on the brook widened into some clear, golden-tinted shallows that rippled up against the mossy sides of an old treetrunk, and sitting thereon, with his face hidden in a book, Liliwinkins saw an old man.

He seemed very old indeed: his face was full of wrinkles, and his hair was snow-white and fell down on his shoulders from under a black-velvet cap that he wore on top of his head; and because he was so old, and looked so wise, Liliwinkins thought that he must be a king, for just so had the King, her father, looked whenever she chanced to meet him in her wanderings through the palace.

She stood a long time looking at him, but the old man did not move or raise his eyes, until she called out to him across the shallows in a voice as sweet as a bird: "Good-morning, your majesty!"

At this he looked up for just a moment, and seeing the little girl bade her good-morning, very civilly. Then he went on reading again. Liliwinkins did not know quite what to do; she did not want to disturb the old man, and yet she wanted very much to ask him where she might get some breakfast. While she stood there, thinking, he unexpectedly looked up again.

"I thought I heard a voice," he said. "Ah, yes! it was you, perhaps. I had forgotten that I was not at home with my children and grandchildren; but perhaps you are my grandchild; are

you?"

"Oh, no, indeed, your majesty," said Liliwinkins, smiling; "I am nobody's child or grandchild; I am only plain Liliwinkins." At this the old man went on reading again, having only half listened to her.

By this time the little Queen was so *very* hungry that she felt she must have breakfast immediately.

"Please, your majesty," she called out, "will you tell me where I can get some breakfast?"

"Breakfast," said the old man, "I do not want any."

"But I do." Liliwinkins forgot she was not a princess or queen, and spoke very decidedly.

"Dear me!" said the old man, jumping up.
"Are you hungry? I never thought of that.
But I might have known it; I never saw a child yet that was not hungry. Well, well, let me see."

Liliwinkins ran around the shallows, and climbed up beside him, while he took a little leathern bag out of his big coat pocket and opened it leisurely.

Here were some pieces of cake and an apple. "Eat it all up," said the old man, "I had my breakfast long ago."

And, as neither of them thought a word about dinner, Liliwinkins made a very good breakfast, thinking it much better than her usual porridge and milk. While she was eating, the old man closed his book and looked at her. He was very slow at understanding things, but he had begun to think that this might be a lost child. If so, what should he do with her? Where should he take her? Clearly she would be in his way; but for all that, if she were lost, he could not leave her alone. But perhaps she was not lost, and knew the forest as well as he. Thinking this, he asked her where she was going.

To which she replied that she was looking for the Evening Star.

Now the old man knew very little of children, having spent his whole life in the study of the Gerund, and so he thought that if this little girl had started to find the Evening Star, she would, no doubt, try to find it everywhere, as he had observed that it was the manner of children to persist until they had what they wanted. Now, clearly it would not do to let so small a child wander around on so fruitless an errand. He would have to take care of her, whether he liked it or not; and this seemed very sad, for he had come to live in the forest for no other reason than to escape his children and grandchildren, who constantly hinderea his study of the Gerund.

But there was no use in repining over what could not be helped, and he looked at Liliwinkins as pleasantly as he could. She had finished her breakfast, and now sat ready to thank her kind entertainer, and go on her way whithersoever the little brook might lead.

"Good-bye, your majesty," she said, jumping

down; "thank you for my breakfast."

"But where are you going?" asked the old man; "why not stay here awhile? I have never found a pleasanter place anywhere!"

But Liliwinkins would not listen to this, and said that she was going to follow the stream; and so there was nothing for the old man to do but start off with her and see that she came to no harm.

All that day they wandered by the grassy banks of the little brook, whose voice still seemed to call Liliwinkins onward; but when the afternoon shadows began to settle down over the woods the little girl grew very tired, and wished she had come to the end of her journey. And now it seemed as if the brook had heard her wish and granted it, for a little farther on its musical song ceased suddenly, as it entered a tiny woodland lake, and Liliwinkins had no doubt that she had reached the home of the Evening Star.

She was sure of it when she looked ahead and saw the very sky itself shining blue and clear right across the silver water, and she ran gladly around the little lake, expecting to find the beautiful star in the midst of this soft, cloudy blue.

But what she had taken for a bit of the sky was only a patch of brilliant forget-me-nots, that had grown to great perfection in this damp, mossy little glade, and the Evening Star was as far off as ever.

Liliwinkins at first felt inclined to cry at this discovery; she was weary with her long day's journey, and hungry, and, now that she found herself so far away from home, just a little bit lonesome.

But before she had time to put any of these feelings into words, something happened which made her forget all about herself. This was the appearance of a little boy about her own size, whom she suddenly saw standing on the opposite side of the lake.

He looked so exactly like Allola that for a moment Liliwinkins thought it must be he; but presently she saw that this boy was dressed in coarse, rough clothing, and that his hands, which were full of scarlet berries, were brown and rough, as if used to work; while his fair hair, which fell over his shoulders in long curls, was covered by a little cap so ragged and shapeless that the little girl was quite sure that he was not a prince or a duke, or any one, in fact, but just some plain nobody like herself. Of this she felt glad, for she had a great curiosity to find out how

plain nobodies lived, and what they did, and wherein they were different from royal somebodies; and so she called across to the little boy at once, being determined to lose no time.

"Who are you?" she asked.

"I'm Atla," replied the boy. "Who are you?"

"I'm Liliwinkins."

"And who is he," nodding to the old man.

"Why, he is—his Majesty," said Liliwinkins, after trying in vain to answer this question to her own satisfaction.

At this the boy's eyes grew round and big with astonishment. His Majesty!—that must mean the King, because his grandmother had told him that kings were always spoken of in that way, and she ought to know, having lived at court as a scullery-maid when she was a young girl. Off went the ragged cap, and over his face tumbled his long curls, while Atla made a low bow, having learned so much of the ways of courts from his grandmother; but to this courtesy the old man only smiled serenely, not having heard anything of the talk between the children, and being taken up with a new thought about the Gerund; and if he noticed Atla at all, it was only to think of him as some pleasant little boy with pretty manners, whom, perhaps, Liliwinkins might know. But this last thought had no sooner come to him than it quite startled him out of his study. If this were only the little girl's home, now, he might leave her in safety and go on his way.

"My dear," he said, eagerly, "is this your home?"

"My home?" repeated Liliwinkins, looking around through the shadowy woods. "No, indeed; it isn't half as nice as this."

"Ah!" said the old man, "in that case I will have to keep you with me a while longer. You'll let me know when you come to your home, won't you, my dear?"

"Oh, we'll never come to it," said Liliwinkins;
"I'm sure of that."

"Dear me!" exclaimed the old man, and he sighed deeply, wondering if he ever should be able to study the *Gerund* again.

But the little boy had been greatly pleased with Liliwinkins's answer, for, in the first place, he was glad to find that her home was not some grand and beautiful place, as he had feared it might be from her dress; and, in the second place, if she never found her home, perhaps she would always stay with him, for by this time he was quite sure that nothing in the world would be so delightful as to have this little girl for a playmate all his life.

And so, being hospitable as well as gentle-mannered, he now proposed that they should all go to his grandmother's cottage and have supper. Liliwinkins immediately consented to this, and as the old man could only follow her, they all started off through a narrow, crooked wood-path, which wound its way through shining laurels and groups of magnolias with their waxen buds half open, and presently they arrived at a little house. The door stood open, and in it Liliwinkins saw the figure of an old woman, bent with age and leaning on a stick. Her head was turned in their direction, and she appeared to be listening to the strange footsteps; and, as Liliwinkins came nearer to her, she saw that she was quite blind.

This touched her heart with compassion, and, wanting to show her sympathy in some way, she ran up to the old woman and softly stroked the wrinkled hands that were leaning so heavily on the staff.

The old face brightened up in a moment. She was always fearing trouble when Atla went off into the forest, but now he had evidently brought home friends.

"Who is it, my child?" she asked; "the touch of the hands seems strange to me."

"Grandmother, it is Liliwinkins and his Majesty."

"The King!" The old figure straightened itself in astonishment. News of the great war between the Regent and the six big brothers had reached her lonely home, and she knew there had been a change of sovereigns. It is true she had thought that it had been a queen that was deposed, but no doubt she had made a mistake. She was old and stupid, and it must have been that the old King was not dead, as she had heard, but that he had been dethroned, and was now a fugitive, homeless, and more miserable than even she herself was, although she was blind and very poor.

Now, as was his custom, the old man had left all the talking to the others, and had no idea that he was being made a king in this strange fashion; for not only did he never talk except when he could not possibly help it, but he never listened either, and people might talk for hours all around him without his knowing in the least what they were saving.

And so, when the old woman bowed very low before him and called him "Your Majesty," he was scarcely conscious of it, and was only glad that they had come to some place where Liliwinkins would perhaps stay awhile, while he took up his interrupted studies.

The grandmother led them into a plain little

room furnished with a common table, some wooden chairs, and a spinning-wheel; the floor was bare, and in the great open fireplace, which extended all along one side of the room, a cheerful fire was burning, for the nights were always chilly there in the heart of the forest.

The old man looked around well pleased. It seemed like a place where no one would interrupt him in the study of the *Gerund*.

As for Liliwinkins, she looked around with her eyes wide opened with astonishment. The little room quite charmed her fancy, and she at once made up her mind that she should stay there a long time, even if she had to give up for a while her search for the Evening Star.

The grandmother and Atla soon had supper ready, and Liliwinkins was sure that she had never before tasted such delicious bread and butter, and wondered if the honey was so sweet and golden because the bees had only wild-flowers and wood-blossoms to cull from, instead of the fields of buckwheat and clover that extended for miles around the royal apiaries in the King's domain.

As for the old man, he never knew what he was eating, and did not notice that his hostess served him with all the venison and wine there was, keeping for herself and Atla only some

scraps of meat that had been left from their dinner.

As soon as supper was over Liliwinkins asked to be put to bed, for she was very tired with her long journey, and, as she dreamed over all the day's adventures, she felt, when she awoke, as if she had already lived in the little cottage all her life, and had no doubt she would soon forget she had ever been a lonely little princess in a grand palace.

It seemed quite natural to Atla, too, to find the little girl there in the morning ready for a stroll in the forest, and so the children began their new life very happily together, and never for a moment stopped to wonder if it could last forever.

They spent whole days in roaming through the shady aisles of the forest, finding new haunts each day, and bringing home fresh treasures every evening. They found charming retreats, moss-carpeted and vine-covered, where blossoms hung bright with dew until noontime, and birds marked off the hours of the day with their varying notes. They traced the courses of the woodland streams that glided over the gnarled roots of the mighty oaks above, and lingered whole afternoons watching the fish dart hither and thither through the shadowed waves. And when

the autumn came, the forest only seemed to become more charming than ever, for there were grapes to pick and nuts to gather; and each morning called them forth to fresh pleasures in the great woods, where the hickory and maple flaunted their gorgeous colors out as if they meant to summon all the world to holiday and merry-making.

But as the weeks passed, and Liliwinkins and the old man settled more and more into the quiet life of the forest, the grandmother began to grow uneasy, and to fear she was not doing quite right by the little girl.

In her youth she had been taught that no life can be well spent that is not occupied with some useful labor; even queens and princesses had tasks when she was young, and it seemed to her wrong to allow Liliwinkins to run wild through the forest like a fawn.

She felt it would be of no use to trouble the old man in this matter, for he was continually poring over his book and scraps of paper, and she was only thankful that he could find comfort therein, and so, one day when the weather had become quite cool, and the forest not a pleasant place to be in unless one was running about, she called Liliwinkins to her, and talked to her quite seriously about the duties of life.

Liliwinkins listened in astonishment. She had never dreamed before that little girls ought to do anything but try and forget tedious lessons, and roam idly through fields and woods. And as the old woman talked, it seemed to the child that this was a much graver matter even than wearing a crown, or repeating stupid coronation speeches.

But she was an amiable child, and was quite willing to please her kind hostess, and so it came about that one by one she learned several useful things without finding them in the least tedious. By the time winter set in she could bake a cake nicely, scour the tins brightly, and knit warm stockings and mittens for herself and Atla.

But her chief delight was in spinning. The grandmother had a beautiful spinning-wheel that had once belonged to the king's household, and by this Liliwinkins would sit for hours, while Atla lay at her feet in front of the fire and told stories of the witches and fairies who haunted the forest, and the grandmother sat on the other side of the room weaving cloth to make winter garments for them all.

Now the grandmother was a very wise old woman in her way, and had noticed that although Liliwinkins was very ignorant about household matters in general, yet from the first she had handled the spinning-wheel as familiarly as if she had used one all her life. When she asked the little girl how this could happen, Liliwinkins replied that spinning was one of the things she had always known, although she had never touched a spindle until she came to the cottage. This answer set the old woman thinking, but she said nothing, only waited till the child had wound off the first few yards of thread. Then she took the spool in her hands, and passed her fingers over the uneven little ball. Liliwinkins, who was watching her curiously to see if her work was right, saw the old face light up with a strange smile as the withered fingers touched the thread, and wondered what it could mean. But the grandmother said nothing to her, and only murmured as she turned away, "Yes, it is true, she has lived in kings' houses, for the thread is of gold; and the old man is, indeed, his poor Majesty, now so friendless and alone but for me and the child."

Liliwinkins made nothing of this speech, for to her it seemed quite natural that she should spin golden thread, and that it should be woven into beautiful garments such as the lords and ladies wore at court. But she soon found that with all her spinning never a thread of cloth fell to her share, for the grandmother made it





all up into clothing for the old man, who walked around in his mantle of cloth-of-gold, and slept under a coverlet of the same costly material without ever knowing it, and only felt thankful that no one interrupted his precious studies.

To Liliwinkins, however, this only seemed right and proper, as she was accustomed to seeing kings wear such fine clothing, and she spun on quite merrily, and told Atla many a story of the court and of her life in the King's palace.

And the grandmother listened and believed it all, for she said the old man had the very head and air of a king, and who could know better than she who had served royal personages in her youth? But as the winter passed, and the yards of shining stuff increased until the corner of the room where it was stored shone like sunlight through even the darkest, rainiest days, the old woman grew anxious over so much wealth, and began to wonder what it would be best to do with it all.

Atla often passed his hands caressingly over it, and longed for a little cap of it, and Liliwin-kins would have liked a dress and mantle, such as she had worn in the old days, but to these suggestions the grandmother always replied, that such material was not to make clothing for nobodies, and as Atla knew he was a nobody, and

Liliwinkins had been told she was one, they both stopped asking, and grew content with their gray homespun, for Liliwinkins's light summer dress had long since been replaced by one of coarse woollen, that had been woven by her kindhearted hostess.

When the spring came, however, and the peasants from the hill and valley began to pass the door and stop for a glass of water, or a little corn, the grandmother felt that such precious stuff was no longer safe beneath her roof. And so she decided to send Atla to the King's court and offer the cloth-of-gold for sale.

The little boy was delighted at the prospect of such an adventure, and listened eagerly, while his grandmother described to him the royal palace with its gleaming marble columns and fretted roof, and the great lions carved over the gateway, and the golden eagles set above the door-posts.

Liliwinkins also told him of the blackberry fields, and the meadow-brook, and the first spring flowers in the hedges and forest, and  $\Lambda$ tla promised to see them all, and tell her how they looked.

And so one beautiful day he started off on his journey, and Liliwinkins watched him as he disappeared in the wild-apple and dogwood blossoms, and felt so lonely, that she had half a mind to start off again on her search for the Evening Star; only the thought of Atla's return kept her.

Now in the King's palace, far away, Allola had been reigning all these months, and a very weary time he had had of it.

The six big brothers had used all their art to make him satisfied and happy, but Allola would never say that he liked being King, and persisted in wishing that he was back in his own home in the North. The big brothers always sighed deeply when they heard him say this, for, although they would never acknowledge it, their longing too for the wild life of their Northern home often seemed greater than they could bear. The life of the court was tedious to them. They hated the gorgeous dresses and ceremonious receptions and tiresome state meetings, and slipped away from them as often as they could, spending days in the forest, whose bare trees suggested the leafless solitudes of their own land, and liking nothing so much as one of those infrequent storms from the North that came howling round the palace, laden with sleet and snow, and roaring and shrieking in true Northern fashion.

At such times the lords and ladies of the court would shiver, and gather close around the fire, shuddering pityingly as they heard the big brothers call their dogs, and start for a long walk through the storm, while Allola, who was never permitted to share these rough pleasures, could only sigh dismally in his loneliness, and listen sadly to the hail pattering against the window, and think it a sweeter sound than any music the court band ever played, although the musicians were noted throughout the realm for their skill and talent.

But when his brothers came in again from the night with their hair and beards glistening with tiny icicles, and the shaggy coats of the dogs wet and cold, then the little King always brightened up a little, for he noticed that the brothers always sat moodily through the rest of the evening, as if more discontented than usual, and he felt sure they were wishing themselves back in their old home. The court was changed as much as possible to make it look like the grim castle up among the Northern lakes. All the ladies and gentlemen took to making pets of great shaggy dogs, and professed a fondness for out-door sports that had been unknown before.

Great bear-skins soon replaced the beautiful carpets that covered the floors, for the courtiers were continually off hunting, and trophies of the chase were scattered all over the palace. The ladies discarded laces and jewels, and had their dresses trimmed only with ermine or swan's-down, while the gentlemen wore long boots and heavy swords, and fierce mustaches, and tried in every way to look as much as possible like the six big brothers.

The Regent, who had been kept because he knew so well how to manage the kingdom, wore the longest boots and fiercest mustache of all, and kept continually striking his sword to show how brave he was, and, in fact, everything about the place was entirely changed with the one exception of the Wisest Tutor, who, being a very young man, had early become disgusted with life, and upon the change of sovereigns had retired to welcome obscurity in the library, and spent his time in poring over musty books that told of times when the world was well governed and prosperous, and everybody was well and wise and happy.

Things were in this state when, one late spring day, the big brothers announced the last hunt of the season. The courtiers soon assembled in the court-yard, hounds bayed, horses neighed, horns were blown and trumpets sounded, and all was ready for the start, when, just as the warden was about to open the gate, the clear notes of a bugle came pealing across the yard.

It was a demand for admission, and the big brothers stamped with rage, for they at once thought it might be some stupid messenger from a neighboring court come hither on business of state.

But when the gates opened they only saw there a little boy with a bright, expectant face, and great eyes full of wonder. He was dressed in homespun, and carried in his hand a long basket carefully covered with a piece of woollen cloth, and when he caught sight of the mounted horsemen, came quickly into the yard and knelt before the Regent—who had pushed forward as he always did at the sight of strangers—and begged him to buy some of the cloth-of-gold he had been sent to the palace to sell. The big brothers laughed heartily when they heard his request, and, feeling very good-natured because the intruder had only turned out a harmless little boy, ordered the Regent to purchase all the child's wares, and then join them in the forest; and with this command they started gayly off to the hunt and were soon lost from sight.

Now the Regent was very angry at being detained from the hunt, and sat on his big horse scowling fiercely at Atla, and wishing that all little boys could be sent to Quimbeatapetal and kept there forever. But Atla had no intention

of being frightened by any one's scowling; he had been sent there to sell his cloth-of-gold, and he meant to do it and get back to Liliwinkins as speedily as possible; so he spread out the beautiful material in order to show it off in the best manner, and looked confidently up into the Regent's face, expecting him to buy it at once.

The Regent had no sooner seen the exquisite texture shining in the sunlight than something in the pattern of it caught his attention, and his face underwent a great change. The scowl all passed away, and in its place came a look of the most utter astonishment, not unmingled with awe, and a slight shiver crept over him, for he felt as if he had seen a ghost.

He jumped down off his horse and knelt by Atla's side and touched the cloth nervously as if expecting to see it vanish away, and then looked into Atla's face very respectfully and asked him, in a whisper, where he had bought such material and who had sent him to sell it. Atla, who was not surprised at the Regent's actions, being prepared to meet all sorts of queer things at court, very readily answered that his grandmother had sent him to sell the cloth, and that it was spun by a little girl named Liliwinkins.

At this news the Regent became so excited that he fell over in a faint, putting Atla in a great

panic and nearly frightening the warder to pieces. Some of the guards came flying from the palace to see what was the matter, and the ladies, hearing the noise, thought that nothing less than another revolution could be in progress. All was confusion and uproar until the Regent was brought to by the court physician's sprinkling him with attar of roses, when he immediately sat up, and, seizing Atla in one hand and the cloth-of-gold in the other, ordered them both locked up in the tallest tower.

He himself went along to see that it was done properly, and then returned to the gates and ordered the warder to admit no one under penalty of death.

"Not even the King's noble brothers?" asked the warder, quaking in his boots for fear the big brothers would return and demand admission.

"Not even the King himself," exclaimed the Regent, forgetting that Allola was safe inside the palace walls studying the lessons that he found more tedious and wearisome than even Liliwinkins had done.

At this the guards looked at one another, and several made a motion to draw their swords, but the Regent turned upon them with such an air of command that they silently waited to hear what he would say.

But he only ordered them back to their places, and, re-entering the palace, shut himself in his private room and gave himself up to the study of the most perplexing problem he had ever tried to solve.

But the more he studied the more puzzled he grew, and at last he saw that the only thing he could do would be to ask the Wisest Tutor's advice, and so started off to the library to find him.

Now the Wisest Tutor was not at all sorry to be interrupted, for his studies of late had grown rather wearisome and he had begun to regret that he had shut himself in from all the affairs of the court for so long; he therefore listened to the Regent's story with the greatest interest, and at once proposed to settle the difficulty in a very simple way. He said that he had believed all along that Liliwinkins was hiding away somewhere, and that it was a great shame that she should be kept out of the kingdom; and he suggested that Allola be allowed to tell, in the presence of the court and the great nobles of the land, how his name came to be written in the King's Book.

This would, perhaps, settle the question as to who had the greater right to the throne; for if Allola's name really had been put there by some strange magic it might be a sign that the kingdom was meant for him; whereas if it were shown that the whole thing was a mistake the big brothers would no doubt withdraw their claims, for they seemed honest and well-meaning enough when they were not in a passion.

This plan seemed so simple to the Regent that he only laughed at it, and declared it would not do at all. He said that he knew the big brothers would never give up a kingdom without being forced to, as, indeed, who would? and, besides, he had rejected that plan once and there was no use in talking any more about it; and he proposed another war.

But the Wisest Tutor replied that there were not enough cats and dogs left in the whole country to have more than a single battle, and that it would be simply ridiculous to talk of war.

This made the Regent thoughtful, and at last he said that the Wisest Tutor had better take some paper and draw up a very wise plan and then read it to him, and he would see how he liked it.

So the Wisest Tutor took seventy sheets of paper and wrote them all full of a wonderful plan, and then read it to the Regent, who only shook his head and said it would not do at all, and they must think of something better.

The Wisest Tutor quite enjoyed this new work, it was such a relief to the life he had been lately

leading, and he willingly consented to write another plan; but this did not suit either, and so he continued to write plan after plan until he had written one hundred and sixty-five, each as long as the first.

The last one suggested that they should first find Liliwinkins and then decide what to do afterwards; and to this the Regent agreed, and put the papers in his pocket with an air of great resolution.

By this time the day had worn quite away and the twilight had begun to fill the room; the Regent and Wisest Tutor both found out that they were very hungry, and ordered a very nice supper served, and ate and drank quite merrily together, as they had often done in the old times.

In the meantime Atla had been having a delightful time up in the tallest tower, for it contained more beautiful things than he had ever seen before. He amused himself for hours looking at these unfamiliar and wonderful objects, and would have passed the whole day quite happily up there alone, for he was in no fear of any harm happening to him, as his grandmother had often told him that common people were always safe in the court; and if he grew hungry he still had a supply of the brown bread he had brought with him from home.

But towards the middle of the day he heard steps ascending the stairs, and presently a key was put in the lock and the door flew open, revealing a small boy, about his own size, standing on the threshold.

It was Allola, who had finished his lessons and had come up to the tower to look up towards the hill-country, for he always felt very lonesome on the days when his brothers went off hunting, and nothing but the sight of the far-away peaks of the mountains and a glimpse of the dark forests of pine could ever keep him at such times from having a fit of homesickness.

The two boys looked at each other in astonishment for a few moments, but Allola was so delighted at seeing some one of his own age that he soon came in and closed the door, and began a lively conversation with the stranger.

He soon discovered that Liliwinkins was still alive, and listened with eagerness to the account of her life in the woods, often sighing and wishing that he were there too—far away from this hateful palace.

To this Atla replied that nothing was easier to get to than the cottage, and promised Allola many a good time if he would leave the palace and go home with him.

Allola did not need any urging to do this, and

it was resolved to steal away from the palace as soon as the night came.

Every one in the palace was so overcome by the unexpected behavior of the Regent that no one missed Allola or thought of him, and as the Regent did not know that the little boy had a key to the tower, the two children spent the rest of the day in talking over what they would do, both resolving that, if possible, they would never come near the court again.

As soon as the dusk fell, and before the lamps were lighted, they slipped quietly down the broad, gloomy staircases, and made their way out into the courtyard.

As they passed the library, they heard the Regent and the Tutor laughing gayly, and Allola wondered what it could mean, but said nothing to his companion, and only hurried more quickly on.

Everything in the courtyard was indistinct in the twilight, and the waving tops of the trees in the forests beyond looked like great smoky clouds settling down over the earth.

From afar came the faint winding of bugles and baying of hounds, and Allola knew that the hunting-party was returning.

This thought made him walk boldly up to the gate with a command for the warder to open it.

But the warder had made up his mind that it would be safer to mind the Regent while the big brothers were away; so he refused to open the gates, and tried to persuade the children to play quietly in the courtyard and not wish to run off into the forest just as the night was coming on.

Allola did not insist, for he wanted to attract as little attention as possible, and waited patiently by the gate, while the warder talked in a low tone with some of the guards, and wondered how things were going to turn out, for every one saw that something unusual had happened.

But the twilight deepened, and no one stirred in the palace excepting the servants, who began to go around lighting the lamps and preparing the evening meal.

Allola watched the lights flash from one room to another with an anxious heart, for he began to think he might not get away after all; and, just as the lamps blazed up in the tallest tower, he heard a great shout which filled his ears with terror.

Shouts and calls soon echoed all over the palace, and men and women were seen hurrying from one room to another. Presently a name was called—his name—and he shrank back into the shadow, so that the warder might think he had gone away, but the warder turned towards him

and asked him what was the matter, and Allola had just given up in despair when a bugle sounded from without, and the warder was commanded to open the gate in the king's name.

It was the big brothers returned from the hunt, and the warder very quickly made up his mind that it would not do to trifle with them, no matter what the Regent might say; so he quickly opened the gates, and in swept the hunting-party, in the midst of which rode an old man with long, white hair, and an old woman in a peasant's dress, the sight of whom made the warder stare in surprise and forget all about Allola and his companion, who slipped out through the gates in the darkness and were speedily lost in the forest.

The day's hunt had been most successful: game had been plentiful, every one had kept his temper, and the big brothers had been so interested in hunting that they quite forgot they were not in their own Northern forests, and were very happy; the dogs were yet unwearied when several hours were past, and kept leading the hunt deeper and deeper into the woods, and straying off into directions in which it had always been supposed no game could be found. By this means the party was led, towards the middle of the afternoon, to a little clearing that lay almost on the farthest edge of the forest.

The big brothers, who were always eager for novelty, pressed forward into the open space and, calling the hounds back, dismounted, and after commanding the rest of the party to keep behind, cautiously approached the little cottage that stood half hidden among great oaks and chestnuts.

But, carefully as they came, they were yet seen by a little girl, who stood by the window of the cottage, spinning beautiful golden thread; and no sooner had she caught a glimpse of them than she left her work and, running out of doors, climbed into a great pine whose branches reached out over the roof of the cottage, and, pulling its heavy plumes down around her, made for herself a little shadowy pavilion that no careless eve would ever discover. The place was known only to herself and Atla, and so she felt very safe there, and waited anxiously to see what would come next, for she had recognized the six big brothers and knew that their party must be near by, and did not doubt that the Regent himself would be with them.

The big brothers walked quietly around the house, and stood silent with surprise as they came in sight of the little doorway. Inside of the cottage they saw an old peasant-woman bending over the hearth as if preparing a meal, while outside of the door sat an old man of majestic

appearance, dressed in a robe of cloth-of-gold, and so busy with a book he held in his hand that he did not notice their approach. The big brothers saw that the chair in which the old man sat, though made only of twisted saplings, was covered with ermine skins, and that a mat of the same costly fur lay under his feet; they noticed also that the cap which rested on the snowy hair was trimmed with braided threads of gold, and these things, together with the magnificence of his dress, made them at once believe that they were in the presence of some very august personage.

So they doffed their hats, and waited respectfully for the old man to look up and speak to them. But he, thinking that the flash of the white plumes meant only the passage of some wild doves through the forest, kept his eyes fastened on his book and took no notice whatever of the arrival of his strange visitors. But before the big brothers had time to grow impatient the silence of the forest was broken by the barking of the hounds, who had broken loose from the party and now dashed up to their masters, and at these unusual sounds the old peasant-woman came hastily out of the cottage and in a trembling voice asked who was there.

The six big brothers, seeing that she was blind, explained that they belonged to the King's hunt,

and that the rest of the party was a little way behind, and no one had any intention whatever of doing her any harm. At this the old woman was somewhat reassured, and said she hoped they meant no harm to his Majesty either, for he was most kind and amiable, and that it was a great shame he should be kept out of his kingdom by wicked men.

This speech made the big brothers believe that their surmise had been true, and that they really were in the presence of some king; so they made haste to assure the old woman that they were only a band of honest hunters, meaning wrong to no one, and that they would no sooner think of harming his Majesty than they would think of hunting their own sovereign, now safe in his palace on the other side of the forest.

Then the old woman asked them into the cottage and gave them some cake and wine, and before long found herself telling her guests all that she knew of the story of the old man and little girl who had come to her cottage the autumn before.

The brothers listened in great amazement, and, not doubting that the old man was an exiled king from some far-off country, proposed that they should take him home with them and give him such entertainment as seemed fitted to his august rank.

Now the old woman had puzzled her brains many a time over the perplexing question as to what would become of his Majesty if anything should happen to her, and she therefore received this proposal with great joy, and proceeded to lay it before the old man. But he was more studious than ever that day and was a long time in comprehending what she meant, and when at last he did understand it he flatly refused to leave the cottage, for he had never before known such peace and quietness as he had found under that roof.

The six big brothers had always heard that deposed kings always talked in that way when invited to resume their old habits of life, and they were more firmly convinced than ever that this was a real king. They therefore added their persuasions to those of the old woman, and assured his Majesty that he should have all the quiet he wanted in the palace, and that no one should annoy him while he stayed there, and if he ever grew tired of their home he could go away anywhere he liked, and they would think nothing of it.

But still the old man would not consent; and the big brothers, feeling that their knowledge of the manners of courts was so very small, called up the other gentlemen of the party and begged them to use their courtly influence in persuading the deposed king to accept a manner of life more in keeping with his exalted position. Then all the courtiers, being very willing to please the big brothers, immediately fell upon their knees, and persuaded the old man so vehemently that he perceived he must do as they said if he ever wished to have peace again. So he said he would leave the cottage, if the old woman would go with him and keep all intruders away while he pursued his study of the *Gerund*.

The big brothers were overjoyed at his consent, and not doubting that it was brought about by the superior wisdom of the courtiers, immediately presented all those gentlemen with dukedoms, thus making them more than ever devoted to these handsome and generous princes who had made life so pleasant for them since Allola became their king.

This matter being settled, for the old woman would have thought it wrong to refuse to accompany his Majesty, preparations were at once made for starting. The courtiers proposed that everything be left at the cottage just as it was, so that the old king could come back any time he liked. But the big brothers said it would not do to leave behind the little girl who spun the golden thread, and asked the old woman to call her, telling her at the same time that they would make her a royal princess if she would spin enough thread

to clothe them all in cloth-of-gold, for they never before had seen it woven into such rare and beautiful patterns.

The old woman replied, that if the pattern was rare she did not know it, as she only wove in her usual manner, but she had observed that the cloth always made itself into designs very unlike those she could weave into wool, only she supposed that it was because she was weaving gold-thread.

But the brothers told her that this cloth-ofgold was of the rarest device, and only to be seen in old and costly collections of royal wardrobes, and that the little spinner was worthy to be the companion of kings.

The old woman, however, did not think it wise to allow nobodies to suppose they could become royal highnesses, and she resolved never to say a word to Liliwinkins about it, so she called her in her usual peremptory manner, and bade her make haste and not keep her betters waiting. She supposed the child was somewhere around and had been listening to all that had passed, but as call after call brought no Liliwinkins in sight she became a little dismayed.

"She has run off in the forest," she said, "and I will have to wait for her."

But the old man, who had begun studying again, could not be induced to move a step without his

aged hostess, and as it began to grow late there seemed nothing to do but go on without the little girl, and have some one return the next day to the cottage and take her to the palace.

The old woman then thought of Atla, and, fearing he would be frightened if he came home and found the house quite empty, decided it would be best after all to leave Liliwinkins; and so in a little time all were ready and started for the

palace.

When they arrived at the court they were all so taken up with their strange adventure that they did not notice the commotion inside the palace, which indeed subsided very quickly after their return, for the Regent became so alarmed when he could not find Allola that he commanded all the guards and attendants and ladies and gentlemen not to breathe a word of it to the big brothers, but go quietly away to their own rooms. And the court being equally divided between fear of the big brothers and awe of the Regent's sudden new ways, decided to offend neither, and so every one went off to bed supperless, and the returned hunting-party ate and drank merrily, and then also went to rest so tired that no one thought a word about the little king or wondered where he could be. But in the morning such a tumult prevailed in the palace when it was found he was gone that even the wild beasts in the royal menagerie stopped their roaring to listen.

For, although the Regent and the Wisest Tutor had spent the entire night in writing out several hundred reasons to show the big brothers why the king had disappeared, they were so enraged, alarmed, and indignant, that they tore the paper to pieces without even reading it, and drawing their swords threatened to cut off the Regent's head instantly if he did not at once tell them where Allola was.

Of course he could not do this, as he did not himself know, and when the Wisest Tutor whispered to him that he had better confess that he thought Allola had run away, he was so disgusted at the Tutor's lack of worldly wisdom that he only smiled contemptuously, and the big brothers, seeing the smile, thought that they were plotting some dreadful conspiracy, and resolved to put an end to them both.

But the Regent, seeing his life in danger, resolved to appeal to the Knights of the Sacred Order of Cats, of which he was head officer, and so, shouting out, "Mew-mew, squeak-squorum!" jumped up in the throne and waited for help. Now as the Knights of the Sacred Order of Cats had all pledged themselves solemnly to defend one another in peril, and as many of the courtiers

belonged to the Order, the Regent was immediately surrounded by a host of friends, all waving their swords and shouting, "Death to all mice!" which was their watchword.

The big brothers were so astonished at this that they looked at one another for a moment quite speechless, but soon recovering themselves, and calling on the lords who still remained true to them, they rushed upon their foes, and the throne-room would soon have been turned into a scene of bloodshed had not the private door behind the throne opened suddenly and an old man appeared, dressed in beautiful robes of cloth-ofgold, and holding in his hand a little book which he was studying attentively.

The attacking party all dropped their swords when they saw this startling apparition, and the Regent, looking around to see what was the matter, was so stricken with terror that he would have fallen down off the throne, had not the Wisest Tutor supported him.

For he thought it was the old king come back to life, and that he would surely demand his kingdom at his hands.

But the old man paid no attention to Regent or big brothers, but calmly walked through their midst, seated himself in an alcove in one of the windows, and went on reading his book; and the big brothers, whose rough sense of propriety would not allow them to fight in the presence of such an illustrious guest, put their swords in their sheaths and crowded around the old man to see if they could render him any service before they withdrew from the room; for as the courtiers had promised the old student he should always have a quiet place to study in, the brothers thought it due to their honor to leave him in peace, even if he selected the throne-room itself to pursue his studies in.

The Wisest Tutor, seeing that the quarrel had come to a pause, cautiously approached the alcove, and looked over the old man's shoulder, for he had been attracted by the book in his hand, and was desirous of knowing what it was that so held his attention and kept his interest even in the midst of a possible revolution.

No sooner had he glanced at the contents of the book than he perceived that he was in the presence of the greatest scholar in the world, and one whose fame had travelled to the most remote regions; and so overjoyed was he at this discovery that he fell upon his knees before the old man and humbly kissed his hand; for to him crowns and kingdoms were of small concern compared to the wisdom of this great student.

The big brothers, seeing his delight, did not

doubt that he had found an old friend, and, knowing that the Tutor had originally come from some far-away country, supposed that the two were fellow-patriots, and were confirmed in their opinion that the old man was a king, or at least some very great personage. They therefore asked the Tutor if he knew the old man, and who he was. To which he replied, that he had known him ever since he could remember, and that he reverenced him above all men.

This could only mean that he was a king, the big brothers thought, and their respect for the Wisest Tutor immediately increased, for they admired the affection and reverence with which he seemed to regard his old monarch, even if he were dethroned and helpless.

They therefore were all the more willing to listen to him when after a few minutes he returned to the Regent's side, and proposed to settle the quarrel peaceably, and said they would agree to any measure that seemed just.

Every one else immediately agreed to the same thing, and so all sat down to talk matters over quietly.

The big brothers said that it only seemed reasonable to them to ask the Regent where their little King was, for it surely must be his fault if the boy could not be found.

To this the Regent replied that it seemed to him reasonable to ask the big brothers where the Queen Liliwinkins was, for it surely must be their fault that she could not be found. Then there followed a long silence, for both these questions were equally hard to answer, and no one wanted to seem impatient or unreasonable.

At last the Wisest Tutor proposed that they should all go and look for the children, for that seemed to him the easiest way of answering both questions satisfactorily.

Every one sprang up at once, the Regent and the big brothers both trying to get to the door first; but the Tutor called them back, and said that the search might prove a long one, and asked what would become of the kingdom in the meantime.

After a moment's silence the biggest brother said he would stay and be King while the others went to look for Allola. But to this the Regent would not consent, and, indeed, frowned fearfully at the very mention of it. But he said that he would be King while the search went on, and rule well and wisely.

But at this the big brothers all shouted out, "Never!" in such a tremendous voice that it seemed the quarrel was all beginning over again.

However, the Wisest Tutor settled the matter

by declaring that the most suitable person to leave in charge seemed to him to be the old king, and he himself would very willingly stay and see that no one gave him any trouble.

It seemed to all that this was the best thing to do if they ever meant to begin their search for the lost children, and so they solemnly proclaimed the old man King until the rightful sovereign came back.

Then they rode away as hastily as they could, and were soon out of sight of the palace.

In the meantime Atla and Allola had reached the little cottage on the other side of the forest, and had found Liliwinkins wide awake and overjoyed to see them.

The little King and Queen talked matters over with Atla's assistance, and all declared that they were heartily tired of kings and queens, and desired of all things to be plain nobodies for the rest of their days.

Allola said he had never had such a miserable time in his life as he had spent with his tutors at the palace, and Liliwinkins believed him and sympathized with him, while Atla declared it was a shame.

But they very well knew that they would be found and taken back to the palace if they stayed where they were, so they decided to go away at the first peep of dawn and travel so far that no one from the court would ever be able to find them.

So they arose while yet the stars were in the sky and hastened away from the cottage, taking with them all there was in the house to eat, and the old woman's cherished spinning-wheel; for they had quite made up their minds that they would always wear cloth-of-gold, and they reasoned that the grandmother would surely never need a spinning-wheel again, since she had become a fine lady and gone to live in the King's palace.

Travelling in the early dawn was such a new experience to Allola and Liliwinkins that they both enjoyed it exceedingly, and Atla found it none the less pleasant, although the sights and sounds of the forest before sunrise were as familiar to him as those of the middle of the day; and so they all went on very happily, watching the mist rise and fill the tree-tops with soft bits of cloud, counting the innumerable and fairy-like spider-webs whose delicate curved lines trembled with their weight of dewdrops, and leaving dark shadows of their foot-prints amid the white glistening depths of the tall forest-grasses.

But instead of their enjoyment being a means of delay, it only hurried them on, and before the sun had risen they were on the very outmost edge of the forest, and found their progress stopped by the waves of a little lake whose waving shore-line shone in a semicircle around the enclosing forest, and on the farther side was lost in the gray line of the sea.

The children looked at one another anxiously as they came to the lake, for they knew they were not yet far enough from the cottage to be in safety; Liliwinkins had supposed they would just walk on and on until they got so far away no one could find them, and even Atla had no idea that the forest ever came to an end.

But Allola was only reminded of his own lakes up in the north country, and led the way with a firm step around the curving borders, looking eagerly for the white, shelving beach he knew he should find. He came to it at last just as he was on the point of giving up in despair, for it was quite shut in by two little capes that sent their green points far out into the lake, and not only was the beach shelving and strewn with white pebbles as Allola had expected it would be, but there was also there the very little boat he had not dared to expect, but only wished for with all his heart.

He had not whispered this hope to either of his companions, but when he saw the boat he said, with a sigh of relief—"I thought we must find a boat somewhere around this lake; now jump in and I'll row you."

Liliwinkins and Atla obeyed him with great respect, for his knowledge of lakes seemed to them wonderful; and they soon found that his Northern training was the best help they could have had, for he steered the boat right out towards the sealine, and as they approached the middle of the lake they saw that the outlet was half-filled with a small island they had not noticed before, and towards this point Allola was rowing with all his might.

"All the lakes in my country have islands in them," said the young navigator, as the keel of the boat ground up against the sandy beach, "and I knew this must have one too."

And so great was his hurry to see what the island contained that he jumped out and ran on ahead, leaving his companions to follow at their leisure.

Liliwinkins and Atla took out the provisions and spinning-wheel, and hid them carefully among the bushes, and then started after Allola, who seemed to be calling them from some great distance; and as neither of them had ever been in a boat before, they never thought of drawing it safely up on the beach, but just left it rocking

amidst the waves; and in a few minutes it drifted away, as is the manner of boats when left to themselves, and went out with the tide to the sea and was never heard of more.

Allola's cries soon brought the others up with him, and they saw something that astonished them quite as much as it had him. He stood in a great open space planted with large, beautiful trees, whose branches hung protectingly over innumerable small structures of stone and marble. It seemed there had once been paths around the place, but they were now overgrown with weeds and wild-roses, and ivy whose long green fingers had reached out to clasp the friendly tree-trunks; the spot was well sheltered from the lake by a ridge of jagged rocks, and from the seaside the air came in fresh and pure with its briny odor. The sun sent his first rays in and out of little hollows where violets lay ready to bloom, and the voices of many birds enlivened the place with the sweetest music.

Liliwinkins was charmed with this beautiful place, and did not doubt for a moment that the marble structures scattered all over were intended for dwelling-places for any children who might wander hither, so she proposed that they should run down the slope and select the nicest one to live in. But when they drew quite near they



", Now jump in, and I'll row you, said Allola."



saw that all the little doors they had hoped to enter were fast shut, with inscriptions carved above them, and as Liliwinkins, who was the best scholar among them, read aloud the long sentences, she speedily came to the conclusion that they were not free of royalty yet, for here were names upon names of kings and queens, many of which she recollected as having studied in the history of her own kingdom.

The place was, in fact, the burial-ground of the kings, and these little runaways could not have chosen a better spot in which to hide from pursuit, for it was the place of all others most disliked and least visited by the court.

But they did not know this, and were much annoyed at first to think that kings and queens must be in their way even here, and only the most convincing arguments from Atla could persuade them that these kings and queens would never be likely to trouble them in the least, and that they probably would not find another such hiding-place if they travelled far and near.

At last Liliwinkins consented to remain there for a while, at least, and as Allola had many doubts about finding another island, he too agreed to stay, and so that matter was settled.

Then they spent a pleasant hour wandering among the tombs and spelling out the inscrip-

tions, and were much impressed by the accounts of the virtues and accomplishments of the deceased sovereigns, becoming more and more convinced as they read that it was well they ran away from court, for neither Allola nor Liliwinkins considered that they could hope to turn out so wise, kind, and beneficent as the great rulers who now slept so peacefully beneath them.

Walking thus happily among the tombs, they came to one which they were delighted to find they could enter very easily, for the reason that it possessed no door. Its vaulted roof was studded with precious stones, and the sides and floor were of pure white marble, and it was so large that the light filled every corner and made it as warm and dry as the world outside.

The children were quite sure that this was the most magnificent place that they had ever been in, and decided at once that they would make it their home, Allola saying that he had no doubt they had a perfect right to it, for in a book he had been studying lately he had found that all the tombs of the kings were built while they were yet alive, and decorated with the costly jewels which were captured in war, and he supposed that this very tomb had been built by the Regent for Liliwinkins during the great war with the King of Quimbeatapetal after the old King's death.

This piece of news made the place seem quite like home to Liliwinkins, and she was more than ever delighted that she had chosen it, and so she began her housekeeping with a very pleasant sense of ownership, feeling quite sure that no one had a right to ever turn her out of her very own tomb; and that same day she spun and wove several yards of cloth-of-gold and hung it before the entrance to keep out the rain, if it ever did rain, rightly arguing that in that place where the kings and queens were all dead, nobodies had as much right to cloth-of-gold as somebodies.

The housekeeping was of the simplest kind, for, excepting the grain they had brought from the forest, they had to depend entirely upon what they could find on the island. But any one passing by and not knowing that these children were quite dependent upon their own labor for their daily food, would have supposed that they were indeed the children of kings, for in a few days they all went about dressed in the beautiful clothing that Liliwinkins speedily and neatly made; the boys fished with lines made of gold-thread, and Liliwinkins had a fine jumping-rope of the same costly material. They spent a whole week in exploring the island, finding out all the ayailable hiding-places, in case they should find them necessary if any one came from the palace to look

for them; and after they had become thoroughly acquainted with their new home they set themselves about making it even more pleasant by clearing away all the rubbish from the neglected walks, training up the roses over the moss-covered vaults, and planting fresh flowers in the empty urns; for it seemed to them quite sad that the place should lie so lonely and neglected in the midst of so much beauty.

It must not be supposed all this time that Liliwinkins had forgotten all about the Evening Star. On the contrary, she had thought of it every night since she left the palace; but at the cottage the old woman had been quite as severe about her going to bed early as her nurse had been, and it was only after she got on the island that she found it possible to sit up as late as she liked and look at the stars as long as she wanted to.

The first night they reached the island they were all too tired to think of anything but going to sleep, but every night after that all the children sat out in the soft evening air and watched the sky and wondered over its marvellous beauty, for the boys were quite as ignorant as Liliwinkins about the night, and the moon and stars were almost as new to them as the wonders of another world.

They saw all kinds of stars—golden ones, silver ones, red ones, solemn stars, laughing stars, stars that winked merrily at them, and stars that would not notice them—but, look as they might, they never could see the star that Liliwinkins had followed from the palace.

For a long time this seemed very strange to them, for the little girl was sure that its home must be by the sea, close at hand; but one night something happened that explained this mystery.

They were sitting, as usual, looking at the sky and counting the stars for the new ones, for they found that no matter how fast they counted they could hardly keep up with the new ones that were constantly coming, when they saw a little ball of light, with a long golden streamer behind it, fall down towards the earth and sink behind one of the great tombs at the farther end of the island.

The children were much impressed by this, and a little frightened, for it seemed so wonderful that a star should fall out of its place and drop down to the earth, which could surely not be so pleasant a home as the beautiful sky. So they watched a long time to see another one fall, but all the rest stayed firmly in their places, and at last they went in tired, wondering what it could mean, and deciding to go the next morning to

the end of the island and find the lost star. But although they spent the whole of the next day in searching they could find nothing they had not seen before, and at last Allola said that there was no use in looking any longer, for he believed that the stars turned into flowers, and that was all there was about it.

Atla said he believed that, too. The golden stars could make the dandelions, the silver stars, the daisies, and the red stars, the clover-bloom. But when Liliwinkins asked them what kind of stars made violets and pansies they could not tell, and the puzzle grew greater than ever.

But the little girl had a thought of her own, and declared that she believed that they would have found the star if it had not been lost on its way down, and she believed, also, that her own beautiful star had disappeared in the same way, and they need look for it no longer, for she knew it was lost.

And at this the tender-hearted princess could not help crying a little, for she had loved the great star exceedingly, and it seemed hard to think she should never see it again.

The next day Liliwinkins still grieved over her lost star, and when she proposed to the boys that they should build a monument to it, they gladly agreed, for they could not bear to see her so sad.

And so they brought beautiful things from the land and shore to build a monument to the star. Shining bits of rock, milky white pebbles, rose-and-violet tinted shells, glittering sea-sands, and flakes of gleaming marble, were all wrought into a star-shaped pillar that stood in the middle of the green lawn outside their door, and when it was finished it seemed to the children quite beautiful enough to symbolize the lost star, for it glistened in the day when the sun shone upon it, and it glistened at night when the moon's rays fell upon it, and so it shone always, which was more than the star itself had done, and so Liliwinkins was comforted.

Still the mystery of the lost stars puzzled the children, for nearly every night they saw one, and sometimes two, drift down towards the earth and disappear. But one night—when they took the little boat which Atla and Allola had built, and for the first time left the shore in the night-time—they found that everything strange can be understood, if one only waits long enough.

The night was so still that not the faintest sound could be heard, and as the boat drifted over the shining water, and the children leaned over the sides and looked down into the depths below, they saw that everywhere, far and near, the whole sea was full of stars.

Liliwinkins clapped her hands with joy. This, then, was where the stars came when they fell out of the sky. Here they found a new home in the friendly waters of the ocean, which, of course, was large enough to hold millions of stars. She looked eagerly down, expecting to see her own favorite among the shining host below, but she could not find it, and turned away a little disappointed at last, but quite resolved on coming back every night until she saw her own lost star, for she did not for a moment doubt that it was there.

This event more firmly than ever convinced Liliwinkins that her own knowledge of things was much better than any she had ever obtained from books, for the mystery of the lost stars had so puzzled her that she had begun to think that possibly her books had been right in saying such strange nonsense as they did about everything in earth and heaven; but now all was quite plain —the stars fell down into the sea; the books were wrong, and she was right, as she always had been; and this made her very happy, for she felt quite capable of never making any mistakes about anything, and knew she could bring herself up as nicely on the island and know just as much when she became a woman, as though she had spent her life in studying stupid books in the palace library.

After this Liliwinkins decided that she would live on the island forever, for the disappearance of the Evening Star had made her dislike the idea of travelling, and she immediately began to make plans for spending her life. Allola and Atla agreed to everything she proposed, for they had great respect for her wisdom, and they thought of so many things to do that they all began to wonder if they could live long enough to do them; for, as Atla recollected, not even his grandmother, who was the oldest person they knew, had ever accomplished half as much in her whole life as Liliwinkins had laid out for the first year.

But, after talking this matter over, they concluded that possibly they might all live to be even much older than the grandmother, and in that case it would be very silly to worry over it. So they went on making plans, and borrowed no more trouble, for they felt that the whole world was good and happy.

They even grew tolerant of kings and queens, seeing that these dead ones had given them no annoyance, and they would no doubt have spent serene and happy lives there on the island if they had only been allowed to. But away off in the King's palace something was happening that threatened to disturb the peaceful days of the

little islanders. As the months passed and no word was heard of Liliwinkins or Allola, every one at the court began to look grave and wonder what would happen if neither of the little sovereigns ever came back.

The Regent and the big brothers had travelled everywhere searching for the lost children, and had come back to court at last believing that they must be dead, for no one had seen or heard of them from one end of the royal dominions to the other.

They came back to the palace expecting to find the old King and the Wisest Tutor quite overburdened with the cares of state, and the Regent did not doubt he would find the affairs of the kingdom so mixed up that it would take several wars to smooth them out; but, to the surprise of the returned courtiers, the country had never seemed so prosperous and happy, which was explained by the fact that the old King and the Wisest Tutor had been so taken up with some new ideas about the Gerund that they forgot the kingdom entirely for six days in the week, and on the seventh were so tired out with brain-work that they slept all day; and so it happened that, since there was no one else to do it, the people all had to take care of their own affairs, and every one was so busy doing this

that there was no time for quarrelling, and the kingdom enjoyed such peace as it had not known for years.

The Regent looked very suspicious when he heard of this peaceful state of affairs, and immediately ordered a large amount of cat's-meat, for he did not doubt that all the neighboring kings were ready for war, and only awaited his return to declare it.

But the days passed quietly enough, and the Regent soon turned his attention to other things, for Liliwinkins had now been gone a year, and something must be done about the rulership. The biggest brother declared that he was willing to be made king at any time, but as the Regent vowed, with an awful frown, that he would never consent to this, it was plain that something else must be thought of; and as just about that time a messenger arrived from a neighboring king, inviting the court to be present at a royal wedding, every one went nearly crazy with perplexity and vexation, for how could the court go without a king or queen at its head, and how could it be decided who ought to be king? In this dilemma the Regent thought he would apply to the Wisest Tutor for advice; the Wisest Tutor said that the kingdom was happy, and why not let the old King remain at its head?

But no manner of persuasion would induce the Regent to consent to this. He said that Liliwinkins was dead, and her successor should be her next of kin. Now the only relative that Liliwinkins had in the world was the Regent himself, who was her nineteenth cousin; and as soon as he said this the Wisest Tutor became silent, for he perceived there was no use in arguing with a person so bent upon making himself king as the Regent.

In the midst of these perplexities all the big brothers were summoned away to the North, to attend the funeral of their father, who had suddenly died; and no sooner had they gone than the Regent proclaimed that there would be a public funeral in consequence of the death of Queen Liliwinkins, and that he was the next king, being her nearest relation.

A herald went all through the country making this proclamation, and the people came in crowds to the funeral, and to see the dead Queen, although very few of them knew whether she was young or old or middle-aged, and every one wanted to be present at the imposing sight. When it became known, however, that the Queen had only been a little girl who had run away from home, the visitors felt quite cheated, and only the promise of the splendid coronation that

was to follow kept them from being so angry with the Regent as to refuse to make him king.

The Regent had decided to have the tomb of Liliwinkins sealed up, since the little Queen would never lie in it; and immediately after the funeral ceremonies at the palace the grand procession started for the burial-place of the kings. The people were rowed across the lake in the royal barges, and formed into a long line as soon as they landed on the island, with the Regent at the head as chief mourner.

The procession slowly moved towards the royal tombs, but as the Regent came in sight of the great monuments he stopped in amazement, for there in the very door of the late Queen's tomb he saw three children sitting, clothed in cloth-of-gold, and gazing at the advancing crowd with their eyes full of wonder. In a moment the Regent saw that it was Liliwinkins and Allola and the strange little boy who had sold him the cloth-of-gold, and, without a second's hesitation, he dashed down the slope and grasped the little runaway Queen by the arm.

Here was Liliwinkins caught again just as she had settled herself in the island for life, and, in view of this dreadful fact, she began to weep so bitterly that even the Regent's heart was touched.

The lords and ladies all crowded around to see

what had happened, but astonishment kept every one silent, until the Wisest Tutor came forward and soothed the sobbing little Queen by promising that no one should harm her.

However Liliwinkins might dislike the things that the Wisest Tutor made her study out of books, she had always found him very kind and sensible about other things, and she thought now that perhaps she might coax him to persuade the Regent to let her remain on the island after all; and so she stopped crying and began telling him what a lovely time she had been having, and how she could not bear to go back to the palace. But much as the Tutor was interested in her story, he saw there would be no use in letting her for a moment believe that she could stay on the island, for he knew that the Regent would never consent to that.

Liliwinkins was found, and she must be Queen again whether she liked it or not; and so the court rushed back to the palace in such haste that several of the barges upset, and many persons came near drowning. Allola and Atla were also taken back under a guard of officers, and as soon as the palace was reached a herald was sent forth to proclaim through the kingdom that the Queen had been found. But the herald had not reached the gates before he was met by the

big brothers, who had come flying down from the North as soon as they heard of the Regent's proclaiming himself King, and here they were to uphold Allola's claims as firmly as ever.

But, oh! how tired they were of courts and courtiers, and how homesick their glimpse of their old home had made them. How they longed to spend months up among the great mountains and lakes, watching the white swans float lazily across the blue waters, or wandering through the forests that they had loved from childhood. But they had left it all and come back to the court to hold the kingdom against the Regent, for they thought it would look as if they had really had no right to the rule if they gave it up without a struggle. When the Wisest Tutor saw the big brothers his heart grew heavy, for now it seemed all the old troubles must begin again. Here were Allola and Liliwinkins, and the big brothers and the Regent, and there would be no more peace for him unless matters could be settled at once.

The big brothers were so rejoiced to find Allola alive and well that the kingdom seemed a very little matter for a time, and the Wisest Tutor took advantage of this to make a long speech, in which he declared that he felt something dreadful would happen to the kingdom unless peace

could be secured; for the times were so troublous that a wise man could not find rest or quiet, and, unless there was a change, he, for one, would have to leave the country and go to Quimbeatapetal, where he might pursue his studies in peace.

He then proposed that, since the Regent would never yield, and the big brothers would never yield, the best thing to do would be to let the old King remain sovereign until Allola and Liliwinkins grew up, and have the matter decided then; for, as it was now, with so many wars and troubles, the children were growing up without any education, and would be quite too ignorant to rule at all if they did not have a chance to learn something. In proof of which ignorance he reminded them that Liliwinkins had solemnly told him on the island that she believed that the stars fell into the water, whereas they all knew that never, since the world began, had such a thing happened.

When he said this he looked reprovingly at the three children, who all sighed, knowing that there was no use in contradicting him, and feeling very sorry for his ignorance. But his speech had a good effect upon the court, and all the great lords of the realm insisted upon his advice being taken. And as both the Regent and the big brothers knew there were not enough cats

and dogs in the kingdom to have another war, they at last consented to make the old King ruler for the time.

Then the Wisest Tutor ordered the King's Book brought down from the tower, so that the old man could write his name in it before the Regent and the big brothers had time to get sorry for giving their consent; and he asked the court to excuse the old man from reading the accounts of the kings' reigns, for he knew he would only fall to studying the Gerund the moment he was left alone. But when the Keeper of the Seal asked the name of the old man, so that the herald might proclaim it to the court, the whole company of lords and ladies was astonished beyond measure to hear the answer, for it was the same name as that of the little page—Allola. Every one immediately remembered that the name had been found mysteriously written in the King's Book, but all had supposed it stood for the name of the page, whereas now it was quite clear that the old man had been meant all the time. This made matters very simple for the big brothers, and they immediately said they would gladly take their little brother home again and give up all thoughts of the kingdom; it also made things very easy for the Regent, who lost all interest in Liliwinkins the moment he understood that she

was once more a nobody, and at once began to plan to be made chief councillor to the old King; and it made things easiest of all to the Wisest Tutor, who had heard that the old man's eldest son was likewise much given to the study of the Gerund, and that probably for evermore the rulers of the kingdom would be renowned for wisdom and learning.

After much discussion, it was agreed that Liliwinkins should remain in the royal palace and be educated at the expense of the state, since her father had once been king; and as she was assured that the sovereignty had passed to a new line, and she would never have to be queen again, she felt quite resigned to the lot, and made up her mind to be tolerably happy, especially as she and Atla and Allola had agreed between them that as soon as they were grown up they would start off again and find another island, and be happy there forever. For the present Atla was to remain at court, to be near his grandmother, whom the old King would in no wise do without.

The Regent was made chief councillor upon condition that he would never interrupt the King while at his studies; and as soon as these important matters were settled, Allola and his big brothers started for the Northern lakes, for they could not think of remaining at the palace a moment longer.

And so this very eventful day came to an end at last, and every one at the court felt sure that there never would be any more wars in that kingdom, for every one was happy and trouble seemed a long way off.

When night came, Allola slept on a bed of pine-needles, wrapped in his biggest brother's cloak, and dreamed of his mother; and the big brothers dreamed that they had captured six golden eagles. Atla, lying at the foot of the King's bed, dreamed that he was back in the cottage with his grandmother, and supposed he was hearing the noise of the spinning-wheel, when really it was the King studying aloud in his sleep. The Regent dreamed that he had discovered a conspiracy, and the Wisest Tutor was blessed with a vision of a magnificent temple which the sixteenth descendant of the old King had raised in honor of the Gerund.

And up in a room alone by herself a little girl dreamed of the stars. Her dream was so vivid that she awoke and went to the window, for she had grown so fond of looking at the sky in the night-time that she felt lonesome for a little glimpse of it; the far-away heavens were full of innumerable golden lights, and the earth be-

low sent up delicious odors of midsummer flowers; and as the child looked out on all this beauty she suddenly saw something which thrilled her heart with a new delight. Away up in the sky hung a golden ball that filled all the space around it with lustrous beauty; it was the Evening Star in its old place, shining in all its olden splendor.

Liliwinkins looked at it a long time with her brain full of happy thoughts; but as she got back into bed again she said to herself, in a puzzled voice, "Dear me! I wonder if the Wisest Tutor does know more about some things than I do!"

Then she resolved to pay more attention in future to what her tutors and governesses taught her, for who could tell how useful it might not be when she and Atla and Allola again went away to live on an island by themselves?

"Up in a room alone by herself, a little girl dreamed of the stars."



## The Golden Dew-drops.

The Fairy Queen was in trouble. She sat in her purple pavilion, made of the enfolding petals of the iris, and all the maids of honor trembled, for never before had they seen such a frown upon the royal brow.

They had begged her to leave her curtained throne and come out into the sunshine, for the morning was perfect, and the flowers were awaiting her customary visit; but she only frowned the more when they suggested this, and said that the shadow of the iris was more grateful to her mood.

Thereupon the maids of honor shook their heads and said nothing more, for they knew it would be of no use.

When the Queen perceived, by their silence, that she had fully impressed them with a sense of her woe-be-goneness, she began to brighten up somewhat, and gave one or two little sighs that

were less doleful than usual, and finally even so far recovered her spirits as to signify that the curtains of the pavilion might be drawn a little, so as to admit some of the sunshine. A very little, she said.

When this had been done, and the maids had begun to cheer up a little, the Queen increased their happiness by condescending to explain the cause of her ill-humor.

"Who went to the ball last night?" she asked. It was a useless question, for she well knew that not a single maid of honor would have missed the ball for the wealth of Fairy Land.

But they all knew that the Queen was given to asking useless questions, as a prerogative of royalty, and so answered, reverently enough,

"We were all there, your Majesty."

"And did you all see the Princess Aglia?"

"Oh, yes, your Majesty."

"And what did you think of her complexion?"
But at this awful question there was silence, for none dared reply, not knowing what the Queen wanted them to say.

"Well," said the Queen, graciously, on perceiving their confusion, "I think she has the loveliest complexion I ever saw; my own looked pea-green beside it."

This remark made it still harder for the maids

of honor to say anything, and so there was silence again.

But the Queen kindly let it pass unnoticed and continued, "Yes, I admired it so that at last I really had to ask her how she managed it. I knew that ordinary dew would not produce such a complexion as that, and what do you think she said?"

"Oh, indeed, your Majesty," cried all the maids of honor at once, glad of a chance to use their voices, "what could she say?"

"What, indeed?" cried the Queen. "I expected she would say she used white-violet powder, at the very least. But she did not. She said that she washed her face every Monday morning in Golden Dew-drops."

"Golden Dew-drops!" exclaimed all the maids of honor.

"Golden Dew-drops," repeated the Queen.

This was so mysterious that for a moment no one could speak. But at last the First Maid of Honor, who always liked to get at the bottom of things quickly, asked, impatiently,

"Why did you not ask her where she got them?"

"I did," said the Queen.

"And did she tell you?" cried the maids.

"Yes, she told me."

"Well," asked the First Maid of Honor.

But the Queen only sighed, and began frowning again. She remained silent so long that even the patience of Lili, the most patient of them all, began to get exhausted.

Finally the Queen spoke again. "Yes, she told me where she got them, but it does me lit-

tle good to know."

"Oh, why, your Majesty? Surely you are the Queen and can get what you please!" and the maids of honor looked quite aggrieved.

"Ah, yes," said the Queen. "But I do not know how to get the Golden Dew-drops, even if I am the Queen; for they are only to be found in a place that I never heard of before."

"Why, what place can that be?" asked the maids.

"The White World," answered the Queen.

"The White World!" The maids of honor looked at one another in astonishment. No one had ever heard of such a place.

But, as usual, the First Maid of Honor got her wits back first. "Of course you asked her the way thither, did you not?"

"Oh, yes," said the Queen, "but she would not tell me, for she said it was a secret, a sacred secret, which she would not divulge, even under penalty of losing her head." Then there was a long, long silence, for the Queen had never looked so serious before.

"It would be a pity for any one with such a lovely complexion to lose her head," said the Second Maid of Honor, who was the Queen's first cousin, and often spoke when the others dared not.

"Yes," said the Queen. "But she is my subject; I could force her to do it, but, of course, I would not be so cruel. And yet, I must know; it is my duty as Queen of the Fairies to have a lovelier complexion than any one else."

No one spoke, for all felt it would be a dreadful thing to advise a queen in the matter of duty.

"I tried to guess," continued the Queen, "for, of course, no one could be held responsible for a secret that any one else could guess; but although my guesses were unusually clever, as they always are, I did not come anywhere near the truth."

"Did you repeat the name every time?" asked the First Maid of Honor. "You know, one is sure to guess right then."

"Yes, indeed! I would not forget that, you may be sure. I said, 'The White World, is it in the heart of the white rose?' But the Princess shook her head, no. Then I asked if it were in the clouds, or in the bell of the lily-of-the-valley,

or the cup of the snowdrop, but to every question she only answered, no."

The maids of honor all began to look very sad at this, for it seemed quite hopeless, and they were all on the verge of tears, when the First Maid of Honor proposed that every one should make a hundred guesses, and see if one could not guess right.

So the Queen sent for the Princess Aglia, and bade her stand before her, while each maid of honor gave a hundred guesses as to where the White World was; but none of the guesses were right, and when the guessing was over the Princess looked as worried as the rest, for she began to fear that her head might be in danger.

But the Queen reassured her by proposing a new plan.

"I will send Lili," she said; "she is always to be relied on, and she will find it if it is to be found. Come forward, Lili."

Lili came forward, dutifully, but her heart sank. It seemed to her that reliable people were always called upon to do everything disagreeable, and that the unreliable ones were always sure to get out of everything hard. And she heartily wished that the Queen would choose some unreliable fairy to go in search of the White World, for she was sure she would never find it.

But the Queen only thought that Lili must feel greatly honored to be chosen for such an important mission, and smiled on her serenely.

"You can start any time within twenty-four hours," she said; "and you are to find the White World. Good-bye, I am tired!" And she dismissed the maids of honor with a wave of her hand.

Lili left the purple pavilion sorrowfully, for her heart was very heavy. She was almost determined to refuse to go on the Queen's errand, and she said to herself she would not start anyway until the twenty-third hour, and she didn't care whether she ever came back or not.

So she walked across the lawn as slowly as possible, and did not in the least care what should become of her in her travels.

But before she reached the lilac-bushes, where she had meant to go and have a good cry, she was met by the Princess Aglia, whose pale face and sorrowful eyes at once attracted her attention. The poor princess had been sobbing so bitterly that her lovely complexion was almost ruined, and Lili's hard-heartedness melted quite away at sight of her grief.

"Do not grieve," she said, kindly, to the afflicted fairy. "I will surely find the White World, and you can keep your secret safe."

"Oh, you are very good," answered the princess, beginning to sob again, "but suppose you never come back, then I shall feel as if I had killed you. Oh, I am sure I would much rather be beheaded at once than to have you go on this journey; wait a moment and I will tell the Queen so." And she turned to fly back to the pavilion.

But Lili caught her by the hand. "Indeed you shall not," she cried, earnestly; "do you suppose my miserable life would be of any use to me if you lost your head? No; let it never be said that fairies forsake their friends in time of trouble. I am going at once," and before Aglia could stop her she had spread her wings and flown to the top of the highest tree on the lawn.

Here she poised herself a moment to consider which way she should go first.

"I must go to the North, and the South, and the East, and the West," she said, at last. "Well, I guess I will try the West first;" and she spread her wings once more, and Aglia, who had been watching her anxiously, saw her flit away over the tops of the trees, and disappear at last in the blue depths of the sky.

Lili had never had the privilege of going just where she wanted to before, for the Queen was a most exacting mistress, and kept a strict watch

upon the outgoings and incomings of all the fairies, and now the little traveller decided she would keep away from the earth for a while, and see how it seemed up in the sky. So she kept above the clouds all day, and saw so many strange and curious things that she almost felt already paid for her journey. But as it began to grow late she remembered her errand, and flew down to the earth again, alighting on the top of a tall pine that stood almost alone in the middle of a great plain. "This will be a good place to start from," she said, "for I can see this tree ever so far, and fly back to it in case I get lost." Then she smoothed her hair, which had become a little disarranged, shook out her gauzy robes, and started on her journey in earnest.

She had taken pains all day to keep going westward, and so hoped to reach the West before dark, and flew diligently on, never stopping once, though she had many temptations to do so, for she saw new and wonderful things all the time. Strange and beautiful insects fluttered around her, their silver and golden wings glistening, and their eyes big with wonder at the sight of their strange visitor; ruby-throated humming-birds floated up to her, thinking that they had discovered a new relation, and a gorgeous dragonfly offered to escort her to the end of her.journey;

but she took no notice of any of them, and, only pausing just once to beg a little honey of a friendly bee, went straight on until she came to the West, and entered its golden gates just as the sun was going down.

She saw at once that she had entered a beautiful place, and thought that she certainly would find the Golden Dew-drops there, and went on very cheerfully through the unknown ways.

All the paths were bordered with red roses; and scarlet poppies and crimson hollyhocks spread their silken leaves to the air. On the lakes red swans were floating, and through the air flew beautiful birds with crimson feathers; and as Lili went on, she saw that everything in the place was red. The trees looked as though they were on fire, the waters were the color of the sunset, the lilies on the borders of the lake lifted flaming petals up to the dew, and the fruit that hung from the turning vines was as red as the reddest gold.

At first Lili thought only of the marvellous beauty of it all, but as she went on she began to wonder whether she had not come to the wrong place. Still, she thought she might come to something different after a while, and so she went on and on, until she grew very tired. Just as she was beginning to think she would never get to the end of this strange country, she saw a little figure dressed in scarlet, sitting under a red raspberry-bush. Lili went up to it quietly, and saw that it was a queer little man. He jumped up as soon as he saw her, and bowed very politely. "Oh, you are a new visitor," he said, kindly; "we often have them. Allow me to offer you some refreshment." And he handed her some clover nectar in a ruby cup. Lili took it gratefully, for she was almost exhausted, and it brightened her up wonderfully.

"Shall I send some one to show you around?" asked the little man when she had finished.

"Oh, no, thank you," said Lili; "I am very tired, but will you please tell me what place this is?"

The little man looked at her in astonishment.

"Why, this is the Red World," he said, at length.

"Ah!" said Lili, feeling bitterly disappointed, "then I am in the wrong place. Isn't there anything white here at all?"

"White!" repeated the man, "what is white?"
Lili's heart sank. "Never mind," she said, "if
you don't know. But I will have to stay all
night, I am so tired."

"Certainly," said the little man, and he led her to a scarlet tulip which was fitted up as a bed-chamber for chance visitors, and left her to forget her troubles in sleep.

The next morning, after breakfasting in a pink morning-glory, she started again on her journey,

going back first to the pine-tree.

She flew gayly along, for she was quite sure she should find the Golden Dew-drops in the east, and rejoiced to think how much happiness she would be the means of bringing to poor Aglia.

But long before she reached the pine-tree she saw that she would have to give over travelling for that day at least, for it began to rain, and came down in such a steady pour that she was only too glad when she reached the pine to take refuge in an empty bird's-nest and let the weather have its own way. It was a beautiful rain, and the pine seemed to enjoy it so much that Lili could not help finding pleasure in it too, though once in a while the thought of Aglia made her feel sad.

But the pine-tree, evidently, had no sorrowful thoughts. It shook its glossy tassels out in the damp air, until they hung fringed with raindrops, and the branches were so freighted with moisture that they drooped low towards the ground, and the light winds, creeping through, could scarcely move them.

The thunder growled all along the west, and

the lightning flashed fiercely over the wide, dark plain, but the pine cared not, and stood firm and confident in its beauty and strength, as if glorying in the storm.

All day long it rained, rained, rained, and but for the company of the thrushes in the bough above her Lili would have been terribly lonesome, for the fairies are sociable beings, and even the bravest of them are afraid of lightning.

But just as she had made up her mind that it must have rained forever, and that she would not know what sunlight was if she ever saw it again, the clouds broke away, the sunset lighted the west, and the thrushes went flying away, glad of the chance to stretch their wings. The storm was over, and Lili felt that she must start immediately, and so make up for lost time. She flew fast and merrily, for she felt in excellent spirits, and even when the last streak of light faded out from the west she kept on her way, for the sky was full of stars, and travelling was a delight.

And so she went on and on until within two hours of dawn, when she suddenly found she was tired, and dropped into a blue-bell to take a nap.

When she awoke it was broad daylight, and she knew she had reached the East, for its azure portals stood right before her. She passed through them a little timidly, for she felt somewhat shy of meeting strangers, but her first glance around made her forget everything else.

All around stretched fair meadows, covered with forget-me-nots, and watered with pleasant streams from far-away blue hills. Gentians and asters fringed the banks, and tall meadow lilies, and swaying anemones were reflected in the bright waves below. Masses of wild violets clustered under the shade of the trees, and bluebirds darted hither and thither through the branches, or skimmed over the meadow in long, graceful flights.

Blueberries and grapes hung in profusion from bush and vine, and lengths of trailing violet clematis twined round and round the tree-trunks.

Over this scene of beauty bent the bluest sky that Lili had ever seen, and as she looked around she wished that all her friends were with her to enjoy the wonderful sight.

But she doubted whether she had yet reached her journey's end, and when she suddenly perceived a little child standing in front of her, she hesitated a moment before speaking to her, for she knew she would hear something that would disappoint her.

At last the little maiden, who was clad in a dress that looked as if it were made of a bit of

the sky, lifted her eyes and smiled so prettily that Lili could not help speaking to her:

"Who are you?" she asked.

"I am Morning Glory," answered the child, opening her blue eyes wide with surprise that any one should not know her name.

"And where do you live?" asked Lili, dreading the answer, but feeling she must know.

"In Violet Valley," answered the little maid.

"Oh, is that the name of this place?" said Lili, feeling somewhat relieved, and thinking that perhaps she was somewhere near the end of her journey after all.

But the child stared at her as if astounded at her ignorance, and answered with grave politeness, "This is the Blue World, but I live in Violet Valley, down there," pointing to a corner of the meadow.

"I knew it," sighed Lili.

"Oh, did you?" cried the child in a pleased voice; "and did you come here to see me?"

"Oh, I suppose so," said Lili, "since I do see you!" and she sighed again, for the child's eyes reminded her of Aglia, and the Queen was so impatient; what might not have happened?

"I must go," she said, abruptly; "I would stay if I could, but I can't; maybe I will come back some day." This she said to comfort the child, who had begun to weep.

"Oh, I like you," sobbed the tiny maiden; "I

like you, and now you are going away."

"But I will come back," said Lili, and she meant it. This soothed the little one, and she ceased crying and took off her necklace of turquoises and gave it to the fairy. "Keep this," she said, "and you will not forget," and then she watched, sadly, while Lili vanished through the azure gates.

Back to the pine-tree again flew the patient fairy, which she reached too late and too tired to think of leaving again for that day. But she was up and on her way with the first ray of morning, and flew across the plain as brightly as ever, for this little fairy was very light-hearted, and was always sure that whatever she wanted was always going to happen just the very next time, no matter how often she was disappointed.

She had decided to try the South this time, and as she journeyed on she found that this was the most trying trip she had had, for it soon grew very hot, and the plain seemed to stretch away and away as if it were never coming to an end. Once or twice she thought she surely must fly back to the pine, for there was no shelter ahead, and her head had begun to ache dreadfully, but the thought of Aglia gave her fresh courage and she persevered bravely.

At last she thought she would close her eyes, for the sunlight nearly blinded them, and in this way she flew on more comfortably, only unclosing her eyes once in a while to see if she were going in the right direction. She was sure she should find the White World this time, for she thought the sun was so powerful here that it could not help bleaching everything white; and so she grew very contented, and was much astonished on opening her eyes, after keeping them closed a longer time than usual, to see that she had quite left the plain and entered upon a grassy tract of land that stretched to a distant forest.

Lili shook her wings to be sure she was not dreaming, and then flew on faster than ever; for although it was midday the leaves of the trees glistened yet with the morning dew, and she felt sure her quest was nearly over. She was so certain of this that it was not until she reached the emerald arch that formed the entrance that her heart misgave her. For one moment she thought she would sit down and cry and give up trying, but before she could do this a pleasant voice right beside her startled her back to calmness.

There stood a handsome youth dressed in green, and carrying in his hand a branch of young willow, who as soon as he caught Lili's eyes came forward with a kindly smile, and waving the willow over his head said, in a friendly voice, "Welcome to the Green World." Lili could not help growing a little pale at these words, and the youth, perceiving this, at once took her by the hand: "Come," he said, "you are tired and warm, but you will soon find comfort; everything is pleasant in the Green World."

Lili looked around and saw that the words were true, for everywhere was shadow and coolness and beauty. The trees were large boughed with wide openings for the wind to drift through, and their leaves were cool with the lingering touch of the dawn. The grass was fragrant yet with the breath of the young spring, though the midsummer sun was shining above; and on the margins of the fountains giant elms leaned over and dipped their long fingers in the shadowed waves; beautiful feathery ferns grew all around, and the songs of many birds hidden in the tree-tops made the place sweet with music.

Lili was so tired and discouraged that she felt she would like to stay forever in this lovely spot, and as she sank down on a mossy seat and the youth fanned her with a dewy leaf she sighed with content and pleasure.

Her companion watched her face curiously. "Have you travelled far?" he asked, at length.

"Yes, very far," said Lili, "and yet I must go

on, for I am sent on a very important mission;" and then she sighed so pitifully that the youth felt so sorry he asked no more questions, but only brought his fair visitor a drink of cold water in a cup made of a hazel leaf, and offered her some honeysuckle balls to eat.

Lili ate and drank with gratitude, and then took a long rest in a convenient jack-in-the-pulpit, while her new friend sat beside her and listened to the story of her search for the Golden Dewdrops.

He was a very curious youth, and asked so many questions that Lili would have been annoyed but for his extreme good-nature and the kindness with which he insisted on fanning her, and doing other little things for her comfort.

But he could give her no information about any other world than his own, and at last Lili said she must go, for she could find no peace till her mission was fulfilled.

The friendly youth accompanied her to the edge of the forest, and at parting gave her the little willow wand. "Do not lose hope until it withers," he said, as he bade her farewell; and then he disappeared among the green shadows, and Lili went on her way alone.

It was dusk when she reached the pine, and as she climbed into the empty nest she felt that this had been the most disappointing day of all, and but for the cheery chirping of the thrushes above her would have cried herself to sleep.

The next morning she sat a long time and thought over what she had better do. When she left home she had been sure that the White World must lie either in the north, east, south or west, and that all she would have to do would be to go from one place to the other until she found it.

But her experience had made her doubt her judgment, and she had begun to wonder what she should do if the place she was seeking should not be found in the North. Then, indeed, there would remain nothing but to go back home and see poor Aglia beheaded.

This thought was so terrible that Lili could not bear to start on her journey again, and so she sat in the top of the pine nearly the whole morning, dreading to move. The willow wand, which she had tucked in her belt, still looked fresh and beautiful, and finally, encouraged by this sign, Lili stretched her little wings and started towards the North.

She travelled so slowly that the afternoon was quite gone before she had journeyed half across the plain, and she knew she would have to go on in the night, for now she was so troubled there would be no rest until she had reached the North and found what it held for her.

And all the time that she flew along so slowly her heart was full of sad thoughts, for she had heard such strange things of the North. She had left it until the last, thinking she might not have to go to it at all; but here she was on her way thither after all, and it was growing dark. Then she shivered, as she recalled all the stories she had heard of this strange land.

She had heard that there were snow and ice there, whatever they might be; and that there were no flowers, or birds, or trees. Some one had even said that it never rained there, and that there were no streams or fountains. How could there be dew in such a place? and snow and ice, what were they? At last she decided that snow must be a dragon and ice an ogre, and then she shivered more than ever.

But still she did not turn back, for her duty plainly led her forward; and on she went till the plain was left behind, and the stars and the moon came out to keep her company.

It seemed to her that the North was farther away than any of the other places, and the longer the way seemed the surer she became that her errand was quite useless, and she grew confused with thinking where she should go next. She even

began to wonder whether she should know anything white if she saw it, for it seemed as if everything in the world must be green, or red, or blue. And so she went wearily onward until she reached a place where the moon hung low in the sky, and the light of the stars seemed to change from silver to gray. She was sure she was in the wrong country, but everything was so different from anything she had ever seen before that the strangeness of it fascinated her, and she forgot all about Aglia, and just went on in amazement.

Presently some soft, feathery things came floating around her face, and as she felt their cool touch she thought of home, for they reminded her of the snow-drops that bloomed on the sunny banks in the Queen's garden. She had often wondered where they came from, and now the mystery seemed solved. "They just blow down from the sky," she said, "and then drift on to us," and then her heart beat loud with a sudden thought. "Perhaps in the land where snow-drops fell she might find—" But the thought remained unfinished, for just then she passed between two massive columns of purest crystal, and forgot everything else in her wonder. All around, as far as she could see, everything was white, white, white, but of such strange whiteness that Lili thought it was some new color.

At her feet spread a white carpet of curious pattern traced with silver lines, reminding her of the spider-webs that she had so often admired in the meadows at home, and this soft covering seemed to stretch everywhere around. She looked at it, wondering what it could be-was it cloud, was it mist, was it even crushed snowdrops glistening with dew? No, it was something different from any of these, and far, far more beautiful. And then Lili looked at the shrubs and bushes and trees, and the strangeness of them all nearly frightened her, for they were all white, and shone in the moonlight in weird splendor, their swaying branches hung thick with crystal pendants that tinkled musically through the still night. Every tiny twig that lifted itself at her feet glistened with the same silvery whiteness, and everywhere fantastic figures of dazzling brightness added their beauty to the enchanting scene. Far, far away across the plain, where Lili supposed this beautiful land must end, some lofty mountains shone white under the pale stars, and still farther away in another direction some jagged peaks of silver shed their light far across the plain beneath.

Lili thought she would like to see what lay beyond those gleaming heights, and started across the plain; but before she had gone far a wonderful scene stopped her progress. Within an enclosure of lofty white trees she saw a crystal throne, on which was seated the most beautiful woman that Lili had ever seen. She was clothed in garments of dazzling whiteness, and wore a crown of gems of such brilliancy that the reflection from them blinded the eyes of the beholder; in her hand she held a sceptre of silvery brightness, and as she saw Lili and came towards her the fringes of her robe jingled together, making pleasant music.

The little fairy was filled with awe at the sight of this marvellous beauty, and sank on her knees in affright. But the wonderful stranger kindly raised her and spoke to her in a voice of such exceeding sweetness that Lili was at once reassured.

"What has brought you here?" asked the White Queen, as she drew Lili with her to the throne.

"Oh," said Lili, "I have been travelling everywhere, all over the earth, looking for the White World. Do you know where it is? I think perhaps it is not far from here, for this place somehow reminds me of the clouds and the mists, and the heavy dews that lie on the roses in midsummer."

The Queen smiled graciously.

"Would you know the White World if you should see it?" she asked.

"Oh, yes," said Lili; "there would be white violets, and white pansies, and white roses, and banks of snowdrops, and pale lilies, and fleecy clouds, and large meadows full of white clover, and long, long lanes of pear-blossoms, and, oh, everything white. I should know it, I am sure."

The Queen smiled a little sadly now. "This is the White World," she said, after a little

pause.

"This, this beautiful place? Why, it is too strange!" said Lili. "Do you call this wonderful color white? Oh, no, this cannot be the place I mean; there are no flowers here."

The Queen did not reply.

"Not that you need flowers," Lili went on, fearing she had wounded her new friend. "The place is beautiful enough without them. No, indeed, flowers would not know what to do here!"

But the Queen did not seem to hear her. "Why did you want to reach the White World," she asked.

Lili's errand came rushing back to her.

"Oh, to get the Golden Dew-drops," she exclaimed, "and so save poor Aglia from being forced to give up her secret."

Then the Queen arose from her throne and

took her by the hand. "Come with me," she said, and she took her to a spot at the foot of the crystal hills, where the moonbeams lay in softened splendor, and the stars shone with dazzling light.

Here the queen knelt down, and, brushing away with her hands the white covering, took from beneath a little pale blossom in whose heart shone some gleaming drops of golden dew.

She gave it to Lili with a smile. "Here is your reward," she said. "You have been faithful, and the prize is yours. But you must keep the secret safe, for love of me."

Lili looked at her in wonder. Did she love this wonderful Queen? But as she asked herself the question the answer came, and she knew that she did love her more than any one she had ever loved before.

"It is true," she said; "I love you, and I will keep the secret because you ask me to. But I wish I could stay with you. I do not want to go back."

The Queen smiled again a little sadly. "Do you forget Aglia?" she said.

And then Lili knew that this was her answer, and that she must go away. And so she started homeward, but turned often to look back to the crystal gates where the White Queen stood watch-

ing her, until the beautiful face grew indistinct, and the trees were lost to view, and the shining mountain-peaks vanished in the rosy flush of the coming dawn.

And so Lili brought the Golden Dew-drops to the Fairy Queen, who by this time was ashamed of herself for having sent her favorite maid of honor on such a dangerous mission; and had made a law in the meantime that no one at court should ever use anything for the complexion but simple clover-dew.

This set all the fairies very much at their ease, and all jealousy ceased from that time forth. And Lili, because of her travels, was henceforth looked upon as the most eminent personage at court, and was excused for evermore from undertaking any task except such as the most unreliable fairy could perform without the slightest effort.

## The Giant with the Baby Heart.

ONCE upon a time there was a giant who was larger and stronger than any giant that had ever lived before. He was so strong that his little finger had more power in it than the right arm of any other giant; and he was so tall that his head was continually in the clouds, and by standing on tiptoe he could reach to the stars, which he frequently used for lanterns.

One morning this Giant awoke very hungry; he was always hungry, in fact, but on this particular morning he was hungrier than usual, for he had caten nothing for three days. He had been sleeping on the side of a mountain, and as he awoke and turned over he looked down into the valley below to see if he could find anything that would do for breakfast.

He looked a long time and could see nothing, from which he concluded that all the tigers and lions, that he usually breakfasted upon, were away, and that he must look for smaller game. Now his eyes were so large that he could not see small objects without putting on his magic glasses; and as he placed these on the bridge of his nose and peered down into the valley, he saw that it was quite full of deer and sheep and cunning little lambs that seemed to be having a lovely time frisking over the meadow after their mothers.

Here was a tempting breakfast for any giant, but this Giant could not take advantage of the delicacies spread before him for the reason that he had a baby heart, which prevented him from doing many things that other giants did.

It was this heart which always came in the way when he was attacked by the smaller giants, whom he could have easily ground to powder under his heel if he had wished, instead of going off as if he were afraid and hiding his head in the thickest clouds he could find.

It was also this same baby heart that hindered him from feasting upon the tender little lambs and kids, and kept him from eating any flesh excepting now and then a fierce tiger or lion which devoured so many little children that it was really a duty to put him out of the way; and, in fact, his heart so often stood in the way that there would be no end to describing the times it had kept him from enjoying things that other giants found absolutely necessary to their happiness.

And this was the reason he was nearly always hungry. He could not bear to eat anything that had life, for he considered that all things had as much right to live as he had; and as for fruit and vegetables, these were so scarce in that country that the giant had not the heart to deprive other people of them; and, besides, once when he had plucked up a large cherry-tree by the roots, and was making a breakfast of the delicious fruit, he found the branches to be full of strange-looking little objects, and, putting on his magic glasses, saw that he had come very near putting in his mouth seven small boys, who, with faces full of terror, begged him to spare their lives. The Giant felt quite hurt to think they should dream that he would harm them, and, placing them on his little finger, dropped them down to their home as gently as possible; but ever after that he went without cherries, and solaced himself with thorns and thistles, and quinces and the sourest apples he could find. But now there were no apples and quinces, for it was early summer, and the Giant was really puzzled about breakfast.

As he sat looking sadly down, he suddenly noticed an unusual stir in the valley below, and

having his magic glasses still on, saw plainly a large number of people walking up and down, as if in great trouble. He immediately forgot about breakfast, and started down to see what was the matter; but he never found out, for as soon as the people saw him coming they all rushed into their houses, except one little man who had been a great soldier, and could not have been frightened by whole armies of giants.

It made the Giant so sad to find the people all afraid of him that he thought of his breakfast again, and started back up the mountain; but he had not gone half-way up before he saw that he was no longer alone, for the little soldier had been so incensed because the Giant took no notice of him that he had climbed up on his shoulder and began pounding him with all his might to attract his attention.

He was quite out of breath when the Giant finally noticed him, and took him carefully down and placed him on the palm of his right hand.

"You should not have climbed up there," he said, as softly as he could speak; "that was a dangerous thing to do. Suppose you had tumbled off?"

The little man had not yet recovered his breath, and could not reply, but showed his contempt for the Giant by wrinkling up his fore-

head and scowling, like a great ugly beetle try-

ing to frighten a naughty boy.

At this funny sight the Giant broke into such a hearty laugh that his magic glasses tumbled off his nose, and he had such a time finding them that the little soldier made up his mind he would never do anything to make him laugh again as long as he lived.

At last the glasses were found and put on, and then the Giant sat down and wondered whether he should ever know what had been the matter down in the village, for his curiosity had been greatly excited by the strange actions of the

people.

The soldier, who had been watching his face carefully to see if it showed any more signs of laughter, was encouraged by the grave look it wore, and found his breath to speak. "They are all cowards down there," he said, pointing to the valley; "they are all going to move away because they have heard that Oglio is coming. Now I should say, 'Stay and fight Oglio; who is he!' But they will not listen; they are cowards." And the little soldier stamped his foot furiously, for he was very indignant at the thought of losing such a good chance for a battle.

The Giant sighed as he listened. Oglio was a fierce and warlike giant who lived on the other



"The Giant placed him in the palm of his left hand."



side of the mountains, and he well knew that if he once made his appearance in the little valley he would never leave it while a man or woman or child remained alive. Clearly he must stop his coming if he could; so, putting the soldier hastily in his pocket, he leaned over the top of the mountain and roared down to Oglio to stay where he was and not dare to molest his side of the world.

All the inhabitants of the place trembled when they heard the Giant's voice echoing among the mountains like heavy thunder, but Oglio only laughed. He was the shrewdest of all the giants, and had long since discovered that the Giant with the baby heart seldom did anything more than threaten, and so he resolved to go right on and not mind him in the least.

His father and mother, who were tremendous giants themselves, and also very courageous, tried in vain to persuade him to stay at home; but he was so wilful he would not listen to a word they said, and started off in great haste lest they should keep him back by force. The Giant with the baby heart did not dream that Oglio would dare disobey him, and so, after giving his command, he took the soldier out of his pocket and bade him run down into the valley and tell the people not to fear, for Oglio was not coming. But

the soldier positively refused to do this, for he had taken a fancy to the Giant, and thought it would be great fun to raise an army, make himself captain and the Giant first-lieutenant, and then invite Oglio over to a pitched battle and kill him, as an example and warning to all giants in the future. He was so pleased with this idea that he resolved to carry it out at all hazard, and even fight the Giant if necessary, and force him into the army if he would not come willingly. And as he refused to go down into the valley, he used such a stern tone and looked so determined that the Giant thought he must be very much frightened, and kindly offered to escort him home.

This was, of course, just what the soldier wanted, only he supposed that the Giant had been awed by his warlike manner, and went with him as a matter of homage to his bravery, and with this misunderstanding the two started down the mountain, the soldier sitting comfortably on the Giant's shoulder and puzzling his brains over the future army, while the Giant puzzled his brains over nothing but his breakfast, which it seemed to him he was never to get. When they reached the village, not a creature could be seen, and much against his will the soldier had to get down from his lofty perch and

go to all the houses, and call in through the keyholes that Oglio was not coming, and they need not fear, for he and the Giant with the baby heart would protect them against the whole world.

When the people heard this news they came running out of their houses as fast as possible, for they well knew the little soldier to be a valiant man, and did not doubt that he had made friends with the Giant, who, of course, must admire bravery. So they brought out all their choicest articles of food and offered them to the Giant to show their appreciation of his kindness; and thus it came about that he had a very good breakfast after all, though it took him some time to get it, for the soldier insisted upon feeding him as if he were a baby, and gave him such ridiculously small morsels at a time that once or twice he came near biting off his fingers by mistake.

After the breakfast was over the soldier selected one hundred of the largest men and formed them into a company, of which he made himself captain; he then told the Giant that they were now all ready for war, and that he thought best to send a herald to summon Oglio to battle, and then cut off his head and so make an end of him.

But the Giant was very unwilling to have any battle; he well knew that Oglio could easily kill all the hundred men with one stroke of his arm, and he very much doubted if his own baby heart even could keep him from utterly destroying the cruel young giant if he should be so foolish as to do anything so wicked in his presence.

But the little soldier would not listen to his objections, and insisted upon sending a messenger right off, and he would certainly have done this if any one could have been found willing to go; but, much to the soldier's disappointment, not a man in the village would stir to do his errand, even though he threatened to court-martial the whole company and shoot off their heads himself.

There was nothing to do but go himself or give up the idea of a battle, and, as he could not leave his command, he prepared to disband his men with a very heavy heart. But before he could give the order the matter was settled entirely to his satisfaction, for, glancing up at the hills, he saw Oglio himself striding down towards the village, and a horrified shriek from all the women and children showed that the dreaded visitor had been seen by all.

Instantly every one scampered into his own house and shut doors and barred windows, leav-

ing the captain to look out for himself. But he was not in the least dismayed, and was only worried lest the Giant should forsake him too, and so spoil the chance for a battle.

"You shall fight him; you shall, you shall!" he cried, dancing around on the Giant's shoulder and pounding him vigorously with his fists. "If you go off I will fight him myself; I will, I will! He shall not say we are all cowards!" and he scrambled down to the ground, and in a moment would have been on his way to the enemy, had not the Giant coolly picked him up and put him in his pocket, fastening him securely in; for it seemed to him wrong to let the little man run into such danger. Then he took off his magic glasses and sat down and pondered what to do.

There was Oglio striding over the hills, with his hair flying and his cheeks as red as the sun, so eager was he for the battle, though he had commanded him to stay at home, and not molest the little village.

The Giant sighed deeply, for this problem was even more perplexing than that of getting a breakfast when he was hungry. If he had only had himself to think about it would have been a very simple matter, for he would simply have walked away and let Oglio fight it out with the trees and rocks. But if he did not stay now he

knew that Oglio could destroy the whole village, and that he could not allow.

The little soldier heard the sigh, and thinking that the Giant was taking breath for the fight, clapped his hands joyfully and called out for him to do his captain credit, but before he could say more he felt the ground tremble under Oglio's tread, and knew that the great moment of battle had arrived.

As was his custom, the Giant with the baby heart could not make up his mind what to do until it was time to do it, and Oglio stood before him before he had decided what to do with him.

But as soon as he saw there was no time to be lost he quickly made up his mind, and in a second's time had snatched Oglio's sword and thrown it on the top of the highest mountain; He then put his hands in his pockets, and telling the young giant to fight away as hard as he liked, stretched his head up among the clouds and forgot all about him.

Oglio was so enraged at this treatment that he immediately fell upon his enemy with such tremendous blows that the sounds echoed and recehoed among the hills and valleys, and made all the dwellers of the valley tremble with fear.

But the little soldier enjoyed it all immensely,

for he thought that the Giant with the baby heart was winning the victory with one hand, and could hardly contain himself for joy.

When Oglio had pounded away for several hours he began to grow weary, but he still had no notion of giving up, for he had come to the battle with the determination to win or die, and he would have been ashamed to go back to his home without having accomplished his purpose; for he thought that all the other giants would ridicule him, whereas, if he had only known it, all the other giants would have been only too glad to see him come back at all, for they all knew the strength of Baby Heart, and dreaded it more than anything else in the world.

But the young giant, fearing eternal disgrace if he gave up, kept on the wearying struggle until his hands were pounded into a jelly, and his breath was almost gone; then he lay down and kicked Baby Heart until his last bit of strength was quite exhausted, and he lay on the grass as if dead. It was now almost sunset, for the onslaught had lasted nearly all day, and the Giant with the baby heart had begun to wonder if Oglio was not almost tired, when he suddenly felt the blows cease, and hastily withdrawing his head from the clouds and glancing down to the earth saw poor Oglio stretched at his feet.

He instantly lifted him in his arms and examined him carefully to see if he were seriously hurt, but finding that the principal trouble seemed to be with his hands, he thought he would do nothing to restore him, lest he should begin fighting again; and so, carrying him gently in his arms, he strode over the mountains and down into the valley where Oglio lived, and, depositing his burden in a grassy hollow, climbed up the hillsides again and was out of sight before Oglio's father and mother could say a word to detain him.

When he reached his own home again he was so overcome by the thought of the suffering that had fallen upon Oglio, that he could do nothing but sit and sigh for several hours.

It seemed to him very sad that he was so often the means of bringing trouble to people whom he would have been so glad to help, and as he sat there thinking it over, he resolved that the only thing he could do would be to go far away into some strange desert land, and live and die there quite alone. Then he would certainly be in no danger of hurting any one.

But this resolve cost him a great deal more than he expected, for no sooner had he made up his mind to leave his native land, than it suddenly seemed dearer to him than ever before. And as he looked around upon the lofty mountains and down upon the beautiful valleys that lay at his feet, he felt that he should die of homesickness if he had really to go away and leave them forever.

So he watched the sun go down with a heavy heart, and it was not until it was quite dark, and the mountains and valleys were hidden from his view, that he gathered courage enough to start off on his journey.

It was the darkest night that Baby Heart had ever remembered, for there was no moon, and even the stars were quite hidden by the black clouds that covered all the heavens.

But he was glad of the darkness, for it enabled him to travel unobserved, and he wanted to get away without being seen by any one, for he knew that all the relatives of Oglio would be abroad early in the morning to seek him, and he was resolved never to meet another giant as long as he lived.

The way to the desert country was long and difficult, even for such a strong and rapid traveller as Baby Heart, for it lay quite at the end of the earth, with many high mountains and broad rivers between; but he pressed bravely forward all through the lonely night, swimming streams, jumping over precipices, climbing mountains, and fighting the wild and terrible beasts that

prowled around, until the darkness began to disappear, and he knew that he must be near his journey's end.

Just as the sun rose he entered the wide, desolate plain that borders the desert country, and being very tired, and feeling sure that no one would seek him there, he sat down to rest.

But he was so tired that before he knew it he was fast asleep, and slept so soundly that it was two days before he awoke, and even then he just opened his eyes lazily, and would have turned over and gone to sleep again had not a familiar sound caught his ear.

This startled him so that he was wide awake in a moment, and in another moment was absolutely sure that the sound he heard was nothing less than the voice of the little soldier humming a gay military air, as if the owner were in the best of spirits.

Baby Heart put on his magic glasses with a jerk, and looked around impatiently; was it possible that trouble had followed him even here?

At a little distance off, he saw the soldier camping under a mulberry-tree, and evidently preparing breakfast over a tiny fire.

"Halloa!" shouted the Giant in his roughest voice.

The little soldier started, and then putting his

hands over his ears to shut out the noise, came running up, and saluted Baby Heart in true military fashion.

"Good-morning, comrade," he cried, heartily; "So you are awake at last! Well, I am glad of it, for a nice time I have had keeping guard these two nights, so that you would not be eaten up by the lions and tigers."

Baby Heart was too annoyed to laugh at this absurd idea, so he only answered shortly, "Where did you come from? Is it possible you were in my pocket all the time? I forgot all about you!"

Now the soldier had been so worn out with excitement after the attack of Oglio, that he had gone to sleep from very weariness as soon as the young giant's blows ceased, and all the long journey towards the desert country had been made without his knowledge or consent, for it would have been much against his will to run away from any number of giants; but he knew nothing of Baby Heart's reasons for coming, and so, quite unconsciously, he replied, "I found myself here, and here I shall stay, for you are a brave fellow and I like your company. And if there is any more fighting to do, I have no doubt you will be as much credit to me as you were before."

At this speech Baby Heart could not help

groaning, for he did not know what trouble this soldier might get him into even in this distant land, and he could not help asking him not to say anything more about fighting, for the subject was very disagreeable to him.

"Why," exclaimed the soldier, in great astonishment, "one would think you had run away

from Oglio, to hear you talk."

"Well, I have run away from him," replied the Giant in desperation.

At this terrible news the soldier wrung his hands and prepared to leave in disgust; but in a moment more he reflected that it could not possibly be true, for he himself had been a witness to the battle, and he concluded that the Giant had lost his mind and did not know what he was talking about. If this were the case it was clearly his duty to remain with him, and so he sat sorrowfully down and gazed anxiously at Baby Heart to see what he would do next.

If the Giant had not had the tenderest heart in the world he certainly would have walked off and left the little soldier to take care of himself, so annoyed was he at finding him resolved to stay. But before he could speak of his displeasure a noise behind attracted his attention, and looking back he saw something that made him start to his feet with a cry of dismay.

In another moment he had snatched the little soldier up, and was running swiftly towards the desert, with Oglio and all his relatives pell-mell after him. It was a race for life, for Baby Heart had fully made up his mind to let them kill him if they caught him; for fighting was so much against his feelings and his principles that he felt he would rather die than live, if living could mean only one quarrel after another.

But in a few moments all his fears were laid aside, for he saw that he could easily keep a long distance between himself and his pursuers, and this lightened his heart so that the race seemed quite like fun to him.

In an hour he had reached the desert country, with the giants far behind him, and then he slackened his speed into a walk, and set himself to thinking what he should do, for clearly there was no time to be lost, and he must make up his mind at once.

Now thinking was the very hardest work for him in the world, and he sighed so often and wrung his hands in such despairing fashion that the little soldier thought he must be overcome with fright, and began to despise him accordingly. He even thought of leaving him in disgust and offering his services to the other giants, but before he could make up his mind to this Baby Heart surprised him with a loud ringing laugh that went echoing over the plain, and made Oglio and his friends stop running and look at one another in fear, for they supposed at once that Baby Heart had met with some friends, and was making merry over the thought of an easy victory. But Baby Heart's laugh was caused only by the thought that he would never have to fight at all, even if all the giants were after him, for he had found an excellent way of avoiding it.

The desert country was quite round, with a green spot in the centre, where were trees and grass and sparkling streams of water, and Baby Heart's plan was simply to keep going round and round the border of the country, and never let his pursuers come up with him. Of course a battle would be quite impossible under these circumstances, and as he could also keep his enemies from getting to the green spot for water, their thirst would soon compel them to leave him in peace.

The longer he thought of it the louder he laughed, until finally the little soldier began again to think that he was mad, and that he must surely stay with him and protect him. After a while Baby Heart stopped laughing, and began going around the border of the desert country in an easy, careless way, as if he were taking a walk for his health.

And as the pursuing giants gathered courage from his silence, and came boldly on and saw that he was quite alone, they doubted not it would be an easy matter to bring him to battle.

So they started after him in great spirits, and it was not until they had followed him half around the desert country that they suspected the trick he was playing them. Then they stopped and held a council of war, but they could decide upon nothing, for if the Giant with the baby heart was determined to keep ahead of them, plainly they could not catch up with him, and how could they make him fight if he would not?

There were twenty-five of these giants, and thirteen of them were for keeping on until they brought Baby Heart to battle somehow, and twelve of them were for going back and leaving him in peace; and they came to such a fierce quarrel over this difference of opinion that the thirteen at last fell upon the twelve in a great rage, and hacked and hewed them with their swords until not one was left alive.

Oglio and his father were among the thirteen, and when this little affray was over they started with renewed determination after Baby Heart, who was quite at the opposite side of the circle, and could not see what was going on because of

the magic glasses that he was obliged to wear continually on account of the little soldier.

And then the chase began again, and they went round and round the circle so many times that they grew fairly dizzy. When night came they were as far apart as ever, and as the darkness settled down over the land even Oglio began to grow a little disheartened, for in the desert country the moon and stars never shine, and the gloom of the night is terrible.

And then, too, the roars and cries of the wild beasts, who creep towards the desert when the night comes, filled all their hearts with dismay, and made them long greatly for the morning.

But to Baby Heart, who was in excellent spirits, the night was all too short, and he awoke with his sleep only half finished, when the sun stared into his eyes and forced him to open them.

The little soldier was awake first as usual, and had already eaten his breakfast of bulbul-berries when the Giant opened his eyes; but although his hunger was satisfied he was very thirsty, and at once proposed to Baby Heart to go to the green spot and bring him some water.

But to this the Giant objected, and began eating his own breakfast of bulbul-berries; and so hungry was he that he was nearly two hours getting through with it, though the little soldier

helped him all he could by gathering the largest and sweetest berries he could find.

When he had quite finished, the little soldier again asked him for water, and upon his again refusing started off himself to get it, and he would surely have gone to the green spot alone, for he did not know what fear was, had not Baby Heart called him back and consented to go himself.

Now the green spot was inhabited by white elephants and white camels, and golden eagles and snowy owls, and was owned by the King of the desert country, who lived in an ivory tower, and shot at his enemies with a silver bow, and magic arrows that always hit the mark. But Baby Heart knew nothing of this, for the green spot was surrounded by lofty palm-trees that completely hid the interior, and it was only when he got so close by that he could look over the tops of the trees that he saw the ivory tower.

He stopped suddenly, and took off his magic glasses that he might have a better look. He then saw quite plainly, what his glasses had before hindered him from seeing, that the tower stood on a hill, and was so tall that the top was on a level with his eyes; and it was built of such fine pieces of ivory, so delicately carved and twisted into such fantastic patterns, that it looked like a great spider-web hanging down

from the sky, and the Giant was afraid to go near it lest his breath should blow it down.

But the King of the desert country, who had been watching him for some time, thought that he had stopped because he was awed at the sight of his soldiers, who had thronged up into the tower at his command, and he at once let fly a shower of his magic arrows, and then waited to see the Giant fall to the ground mortally wounded.

But, although the arrows stuck all over him, Baby Heart minded them no more than an elephant would mind a pin, and only pulled them out and stuck them gayly into his cap, for he thought them very pretty; and at this strange sight the King of the desert country hastened down from his tower, and bade all his subjects fall on their knees, for a dreadful conqueror was approaching, and they could do nothing but beg his mercy.

Then the elephants and camels were made to kneel upon the ground in two long rows reaching from the palm-trees up to the tower, and the eagles folded their wings, and the owls closed their eyes, and as soon as Baby Heart appeared the elephants trumpeted, the camels moaned, the eagles shrieked, and the owls screeched, while the King and his soldiers raised their hands



Baby Heart looks over the tops of the trees and sees the ivory tower.



above their heads and cried for mercy, and there was such a hubbub and confusion that the sounds reached quite across the desert, and were heard by the little soldier, and also by the thirteen giants who had fallen asleep after their long night of wakefulness.

Baby Heart distinguished the human voices among these deafening outbursts, and, putting on his magic glasses, discovered the King and his attendants. He was at once touched by their apparent misery, and, sitting down on the top of the hill, begged them to tell him the cause of it.

The King at once advanced, and, throwing himself down at the Giant's feet, told him of the fright he had given them, and implored him to go away from the desert country at once if he really meant to do them no harm. On hearing this, the Giant sighed so deeply that it seemed as if his heart was breaking with the thought that even here he could find no place of rest.

But he thought he would not go away from this last place of refuge without making one effort, and so he raised the King up and told him all his troubles, from the beginning to the end, and said that if the King would let him stay there he would never harm the least thing in the kingdom, and would only eat bulbul-berries as long as he lived. The King was much touched by this story, and was very much astonished to find that there were really giants in the world. He had heard of them, but had never believed that such beings existed until he had caught sight of Baby Heart.

He at once consented to let Baby Heart remain in his kingdom if he would promise to show himself whenever any of his enemies appeared, and so frighten them off by his enormous size; for the King was growing old, and found it tiresome to sit all day in his ivory tower and shoot magic arrows.

Baby Heart gave the promise, and was just beginning to feel very happy, when he heard a great shouting, and looking across the desert saw Oglio and his friends rapidly approaching the green spot with their swords drawn ready for battle.

Now the King of the desert country seemed to Baby Heart the wisest person he had ever met, and he at once resolved to ask his advice in this difficult matter; for it certainly appeared that he would have to fight now whether he wanted to or not, for he could not think of running away and leaving his new friends to the mercy of the giants.

But the King was delighted to hear that the giants were coming, for it seemed to him that

giants were the nicest beings in the world, and he thought he should like nothing better than to have a dozen of them living with him all the time; for he had seen at once that Baby Heart could knock an elephant senseless with one blow of his fist, pinch a camel to death between his thumb and finger, and frighten away all the eagles and owls with one wave of his hand; and he thought if he could make such beings his friends he would be forever secure from all danger from other kings, who sometimes came to him with whole armies of orilampuses to steal away the white elephants and camels of which he was so proud. So he told Baby Heart to let Oglio come on, for he had a plan to subdue him. Baby Heart did not doubt that the plan was a very wise one, so he said nothing and waited for the King to unfold it.

"Well," said the King, after a moment's silence, "my plan is this: From what you have told me of giants, I am forced to think that they are a very much abused set."

At this Baby Heart opened his eyes wide with astonishment, but the King took no notice and went on: "Yes, I am sure they are abused. You say they always want to fight and eat, do you not?"

Baby Heart nodded his head.

"Well, I will tell you the reason," said the King: "it is because they have never had enough fighting to satisfy their minds, or enough to eat to satisfy their hunger. That is the reason."

Baby Heart thought this a wonderful piece of

reasoning, and smiled agreeably.

"Poor things!" continued the King; "it is enough to make one's heart ache to think they have never had enough to eat. Now, tell me, has any one ever tried giving those giants everything they wanted?"

"No, I think not," said Baby Heart.

"Well, that is the reason they are so ill-natured. No one has ever humored them. Now I intend to humor them;" and with that he called his Chamberlain to him and gave him a golden key. "Let out the orilampuses!" he commanded.

The Chamberlain disappeared, and in a moment more a great herd of the most terrible-looking beasts came rushing down the slopes, and ran swiftly out to the battle-ground in the desert, which the thirteen giants just happened to be crossing.

These were the tame orilampuses which were trained to fight the King's battles, and Baby Heart had never seen such fierce animals before. They were as large as elephants, as fierce as lions, and bloodthirsty as tigers, and he saw at once

that the giants would have a terrible time in subduing them.

Oglio and his relatives stopped still on the battle-ground, as they saw the ferocious beasts dashing towards them, and, perceiving from the nature of the soil that it would be a good place to give battle, they stood their ground and waited for the attack. The King, who was not fond of fighting, started for the tower as soon as the orilampuses left the green spot, and after Baby Heart had watched the fight for a few moments and saw that the giants would not be likely to come to grief, he joined the King, standing outside the tower, while the King sat in the highest room and showed him his cases of magic arrows, and the silver bow that had been in the family for generations. And while they were thus engaged the battle below them waged fiercer and fiercer.

There were thirteen of the orilampuses, making one for each giant, and it was well there were no more, for the giants soon found they had met an enemy that required all their strength and cunning to master. But gradually the orilampuses became weaker and weaker from the tremendous blows of the swords, and one by one they fell dead to the ground; the giants were so exhausted that they likewise lay stretched all

around the battle-field as if quite lifeless, and had there been one more orilampus, he might have eaten the thirteen giants with the greatest ease.

Oglio was the last to stand, for the largest and fiercest orilampus had fallen to him, and as his hands were not yet healed from his encounter with Baby Heart, he found great difficulty in overcoming his assailant.

But at last the huge beast fell to the ground, and the battle was over, leaving the giants thankful for their lives, for never had they been in such danger before.

For two days and nights they lay there helpless and unable to move, while Baby Heart kindly cared for their wounds and fed them on orilampus broth, which the King said was an excellent thing to put heart in any one.

But on the third day they were able to move around a little, and then the King sent them word that he would furnish them with more orilampuses the moment they felt equal to another battle.

Now Oglio, who was a tolerably well-meaning giant, had been much touched by Baby Heart's kindness and attention, and had made up his mind to offer him his friendship, particularly as he was quite sure he would not want to fight



Baby Heart feeds Oglio on orilampus broth.



him for a long, long time, and so he sent word to the King, by his messenger, that they had had enough fighting for some time, and with his permission they would go back to their own country. Then he had a long talk with Baby Heart, and promised him eternal friendship, and said that he would fight for him with his last breath, for he considered him to be a noble fellow and well worthy his friendship. Baby Heart was glad enough to accept this peaceful offer, for Oglio had always been his most troublesome enemy.

But the King had no intention of letting the giants go, and so he returned answer that they must all come to the green spot and have a great feast in honor of their victory.

They agreed to this very willingly, and the next day the King gave them a sumptuous repast, to which he had invited all the nearest Kings, in order that they might see his strange guests, and be properly impressed with their size.

All the giants wore golden crowns, and were served with the most delicious viands on the table, for the King had given orders that they should be treated with the greatest respect. They had never been treated in this way before, and they began to grow very agreeable and pleasant, for they had all they could possibly eat, and that had never happened to any of them before, ex-

cept Oglio's father, who had dined once, when young, with the old King of the Giants, and had eaten a hundred roasted babies, and a thousand young robins for his dessert. Baby Heart was so happy that he scarcely ate anything at all, and it would have been the merriest day of his life had not a sudden interruption given a very sad turn to his thoughts.

Just in the middle of the feast the little soldier appeared, and demanded to know why he had deserted him.

Baby Heart had been so taken up with the exciting events of the past few days that he had quite forgotten what he had first come to the green spot for, and he at once assured the little soldier that he had not meant to desert him at all, but had only neglected him because he had been so busy. But the soldier would not believe this, and threatened to fight Baby Heart at once, unless he could make a suitable apology for his neglect. He said he had waited and waited for him, and only the sight of the great battle had kept him from coming after him at once; and although the fighting had made him forget all about his thirst, for he was a soldier, and the sound of a battle was both food and drink to him, yet now he must have satisfaction, or Baby Heart should feel the weight of his anger.

All the giants laughed loudly at this, and had they not been in such a good-humor they would probably have swallowed him alive, but the King very wisely interfered, and said that there must be no talk of fighting while the feast lasted.

He then invited the soldier to a seat beside him, for he perceived him to be a very valiant man, and by the time the repast was over they had become such good friends that the soldier had consented to forgive Baby Heart and to pass his life in that country in training the youth in the practice and theory of war.

When the entertainment was over, the King had no trouble in persuading the giants to remain in a place where they would receive such good treatment as he was willing to give them; and, furthermore, Oglio offered to go back to the giants' country and invite all the inhabitants to their new home, if the King would promise them enough to eat.

This the King was eager to do, and so it came about that the desert country became the home of all the giants, and they lived there happily, feasted on all the delicacies that the land afforded, while the king was able to pass his days and nights in the ivory tower with no more fear of enemies coming to steal his white elephants and other pets.

And as the years went by the people in the other parts of the world began to forget all about the giants, and they even told their children that there were no such beings. But still the belief in them never quite died out, for once in a while travellers from remote regions were heard to say that in some of the places they visited they had heard strange stories of a distant land where white elephants and white camels roamed through groves of palm-trees, in whose branches golden eagles and snowy owls rested; and it was furthermore reported that giants lived in that country, and that its king passed his days and nights in an ivory tower talking to the largest giant of all, who was so tender-hearted that he had never been known to hurt the smallest fly.

But very few people believed these stories, and every one laughed when told of a tender-hearted giant, for wise folks said that was impossible, and wise folks knew.

## Will-o'-the-wisp and Prince Toto.

Down in the meadow the fireflies were busy. They had so much to do, the poor little fireflies, for there was to be a grand Summer-Night's Entertainment, and it was their business to illuminate the grounds.

So they flew about hither and thither in the busiest manner, and the result was charming.

And they felt so important!

"Really, what could they do without us?" they would whisper as they flitted past one another.

That was true indeed; the stars were shining, certainly, but they were not of much consequence down in the deep shadows of the long grass; and the moon, who shed her splendor over great seas and vast continents, could not be expected to do anything here. She only looked down very proudly, asked herself what those midgets could

be about, and then went on shining as calmly and indifferently as ever, quite disregarding all the dark corners and dusky hollows of the meadow.

But one cannot blame the moon; she certainly is of more importance than millions of fireflies. One might do without them, but what could one do without the moon?

The fireflies, though, never thought of trying to outshine the moon, for they were so taken up with their work that what any one else might think or say never once entered their heads. For, besides illuminating the grounds, they had to provide for the comfort of numerous personal friends who had consented to grace the festival with their presence. So, truly, they were very busy.

Some houseflies, who were on a visit from a neighboring orchard, grumbled a good deal over the confusion. They could not sleep they said, and it was really very trying to be so disturbed.

For it is a great mistake to think that a housefly does not know the difference between sunlight and any other kind of light, for he knows it just as well as a child knows the difference between the ghostly moon that comes staring in at night and the bright face of the golden sun; and, altogether, a housefly never objects to tak-

ing a nap on a long summer afternoon, a light at night always makes him fidgety, and for a moment the entire company thought they would be obliged to seek refuge elsewhere.

But they were too polite to mention their discomfort, and finally concluded to stay and see what the affair would be like.

The fireflies went on with their work, and when it was finished awaited the arrival of the guests with great complacency, for the grounds looked beautiful.

Before they had time to grow impatient the company came in sight.

First the glow-worms came across the meadows in long, wavy lines of light; the fireflies felt quite a thrill of excitement when they saw what a fine appearance they made, and began to feel sure that the festival would be a great success.

Following the glow-worms came a procession of black beetles, each carrying a small phosphorous lantern. They felt a little out of place in this company of shining bodies, for they were a modest lot, and knew the difference between shining by one's own light and shining by borrowed light; but as they held their heads modestly down, and their lanterns bravely up, no one could call them in the least presumptuous, and every one welcomed them very cordially.

And now what a fluttering there was among the fireflies! for, following the beetles and making them look more insignificant than ever, came royalty itself in the person of Prince Will-o'-thewisp.

The fireflies came and knelt before him in token of their homage, and then, escorted by them and the glow-worms and beetles, he took the seat of honor over the chief musician's stand.

Then the glow-worms arranged themselves in circles before him, and behind them came the beetles, while the fireflies in the rear perched on blades of grass and shone with all their might, and grew quite impatient for the performance to begin.

At last the musicians arrived.

First the katydids swept grandly to their places, and rattled their sheets of music, and shook out their lace handkerchiefs, and looked coquettishly at the beetles, all excepting the Prima Donna Katydid, who felt that she had a right to look at Will-o'-the-wisp himself.

After the katydids came the crickets, who quietly seated themselves, and folded their hands, covered with lace mits, and sat up prim and stiff, looking straight ahead at nobody.

Then came Mr. Leading Frog, the first violin,

followed by his entire family, who had kindly consented to appear on this occasion.

They entered one after the other holding their violins stiffly before them, and in a moment began such a tuning and scraping that it was enough to deafen one.

No one seemed to enjoy it except the frogs themselves, and they must have enjoyed it exceedingly, for they kept it up a long time, much longer surely than was necessary.

In the midst of it the bull-frogs, who were the double-basses, stole in unobserved, and hid themselves behind their instruments, and, after some more scraping of bows, all was ready.

Every one felt a little fluttered and anxious, for to-night Mdlle. Nightingale, the world's greatest singer, was to make her appearance.

The Prima Donna Katydid trembled when she thought of the small solo she was to sing in the hearing of that great person, but she need not have feared, for Miss Nightingale would be so taken up with herself that I doubt if she would have heard anything but her own beautiful voice.

But she was not to come until the middle of the evening, and in the meantime the concert would go on.

So the leader, Signor Whip-poor-will, mounted his stand and began waving his baton.

"One, two, three—"; but "four" never came, for the leader stopped suddenly and stared straight before him in the most terrified manner.

All eyes followed his, and then what a commotion! There would have been a rush, pellmell, helter-skelter, here, there, and everywhere, and that would have been the end of the Summer-Night's Festival, had it not been for the opportune interference of the June bugs, who formed the police corps, and who, with great presence of mind, immediately pinched off the heads of two or three of the excited company, and thus restored something like order, although the whole assemblage quaked visibly.

And what was the cause of all this trouble? Why, only this! that standing there in the night, with his eyes gazing wonderingly at it all, stood a little earth-child.

He was very beautiful; his eyes were blue and soft, and there was a little sleepy look in them in spite of the wonder, as if they had been used to saying good-night long before this. Upon his hair, which fell in long curls, was a wreath of daisies, gone to sleep long ago, and in his hand he held a little willow branch; his little feet were bare and glistened white in the dark grass, and any mortal would have felt just like going to him and kissing his sweet, sleepy eyes; but that

was not what this assembled company felt like doing.

Oh, no! they only sat there and stared at him, and trembled, as if he were a great ogre, and had come there on purpose to eat them all up.

But he did nothing but just stand there, and look, and look, as if he had never seen such a sight as this.

After a time the company gained a little courage at his silence, and ceased staring at him, and began staring at one another.

The houseflies even began a friendly buzzing, which reassured the others, and when the crickets chirped up too it began to look as if there would be a concert after all.

The frogs settled down again, and the fireflies resumed their position on the blades of grass, and at last all things were in order once more, and they all had come to the conclusion that this strange visitor meant them no harm.

But by this time the earth-child had gotten used to the scene, and he began walking slowly towards the chief musician's stand, which he reached just as Signor Whip-poor-will, in a great flutter, was preparing for a second flight; but the child saw this, and smiled so sweetly that the great leader could not help feeling reassured, and stood his ground quite bravely.

Then the little boy mounted the musician's stand, and looked around at the company, and stretched out his tiny, dimpled hands towards them, and said in a very low and musical, but somewhat dreamy voice, "Is not this delightful!"

Delightful was a word he had heard his mamma use that day, and he had remembered it because he liked the sound of it, and now when he wanted to say something sweet and pleasant, he of course used the word he most fancied.

But unfortunately it was a word that none of the little creatures in the meadow understood.

They looked at one another in surprise, and then with one voice asked the houseflies and crickets, as being most familiar with the language of mortals, what it meant.

But here the katydids interfered, one party shouting that the crickets and houseflies did not understand the language of mortals no matter what they might pretend, and the other party shouting back defiantly that they did; and this was kept up for some time, until the June bugs came to the rescue and commanded all the katydids to keep silence in the name of the law.

As soon as there was quiet the little boy spoke again.

"I am Prince Toto," he said; "some one told me

you were going to have a concert, and I thought I would come; and I think it is de-light-ful."

There was that word again. What could it mean?

The frogs thought it sounded something like decapitate, and they knew what that meant very well; so they arose in a body and declared they must go, for they all had the sore throat and could not play; and would Signor Whip-poor-will kindly excuse them.

But Signor Whip-poor-will would not, and frowned in a fearful manner, and said that the entertainment must go on, and commanded the frogs to take their places again; and there certainly would have been a duel between him and Mr. Leading Frog, had not a message arrived at that moment from Mdlle. Nightingale saying that she could not possibly sing that evening, as she had a sick-headache.

This made every one cease to care for the concert, and Prince Will-o'-the-wisp, who always had a great many ideas, proposed that they should have a ball instead of a concert, and to this every one agreed instantly.

Prince Will-o'-the-wisp was at once elected master of ceremonies, and very gracefully accepted the office.

The houseflies said they did not care about

dancing, but would be happy to furnish the music; so they immediately began buzzing a most delightful waltz, the first notes of which sent every one off to find partners.

The June bugs rushed up to the katydids as if afraid the beetles would get there first, but the beetles preferred dancing with the crickets; the glow-worms said they would wait for the square dances, and the frogs began whirling madly around in each other's arms.

Toto stood looking on quite dazzled by all this, but he was still more dazzled when Prince Will-o'-the-wisp came up to him and gravely asked him to dance.

Of course he consented, and they were soon on the grass mingling with the others.

But as they danced Prince Will-o'-the-wisp gradually kept moving farther and farther away from the others, and presently he and Toto seemed quite by themselves. Then the glowworms and fireflies also began to move away from the rest of the company, and soon, looking back, Toto saw that the frogs and June bugs and crickets and katydids had the ball all to themselves, while he and the glow-worms and fireflies were travelling quickly over the meadow, led by Will-o'-the-wisp. And now other things, all with wings of glistening silver, came moving



" Presently Will-o'-the-Wisp and Prince Toto seemed to be quite by themselves."



around them-moths and darting insects with gold and crimson lights. And the great full moon had fallen low in the sky, and almost touched the waves of grass on the farther side of the meadow, and Toto wondered if they would get there before it reached the earth, and, if not, if it would come trailing its silver light across their path to meet them. He was not quite sure he should like this, the moon looked so very solemn. But then it seemed sometimes they would never reach any place, for Will-o'-the-wisp kept changing his direction all the time. "Why don't you go straight ahead?" asked Toto, when he had grown tired of walking in a circle; but Will-o'-the-wisp only flew on ahead and said nothing, and by and by Toto noticed that the glow-worms and fireflies were dropping off in twos and threes, and at the same time he heard a peculiar sound almost beneath his feet, where two glow-worms had just stationed themselves. He stopped to see what it all meant, but his guide touched him on the arm. "Don't stop here," he said, "they're only waiting to light the moles home."

Toto knew all about moles; he had one once, and tied a string to its hind-legs and watched curiously its efforts to bury itself in the earth. "Cannot the moles see?" he asked, wonderingly.

"Oh, yes," replied Will-o'-the-wisp, "but then the glow-worms always go ahead so that I will know where they are without any trouble; two glow-worms outside means one mole inside, that's the way we do it."

"And the fireflies?" asked Toto.

"Oh, they watch over the sleepy butterflies."

"A firefly will shine in a tumbler," said Toto.

"Yes," replied Will-o'-the-wisp, "so I have heard," but he did not know what a tumbler was, so he did not pursue the subject.

On they went, past banks of violets and beds of starry daisies and wide-awake dandelions. "Don't the flowers ever get sleepy," said Toto, whose own eyes were getting very heavy.

"They sleep with their eyes open," said Will-

o'-the-wisp.

"Yes'm," answered Toto; "I sleep with my mouth open."

"All the same," remarked his leader, who was not going to admit that that was the strangest thing he had ever heard.

"Where are all the bumble-bees?" inquired Toto a moment after.

"Dreaming sweet dreams," answered Will-o'the-wisp, and just then he stopped for the first time, and stood still watching a great spider spinning its web in the moonlight. The spider was singing. They listened"Thin enough to see through; Strong enough to hold dew."

"That's right," said Will-o'-the-wisp. "Take care, though, to-morrow will be misty."

"Is that because the sun fell into the sea tonight?" asked Toto.

"Certainly," said Will-o'-the-wisp, thinking that idea was very astonishing.

"I'll weave all the stronger," said the spider, who did not like to be left out of the conversation.

"I smell sweet-brier," remarked Toto, getting tired of the spider.

"Oh, no, you don't," said Will-o'-the-wisp.

"I smell roses, anyway," persisted the little boy.

"Yes, I know you do, and they are the very roses that Beauty's father saw when he came to the palace of the Beast." As he spoke, Will-o'-the-wisp pointed ahead, and Toto saw indeed a most beautiful palace rising before him. The windows glistened in the moonlight, and the marble sides were covered with climbing roses, whose rare perfume filled all the air. But, beautiful as the sight was, Toto could not enjoy it, as he was so afraid the dreadful Beast would come out and make him his prisoner.

"I wouldn't dare touch one of those roses," he whispered to his guide.

"Nonsense," said Will-o'-the-wisp, breaking off a lovely spray and placing it in the child's hand. "Don't you know all that happened years ago, and that Beauty and the Beast have been dead for years and years? Certainly; and now this palace is used as a museum—you know what that means, don't you?"

Toto did not know, but he said nothing, being

ashamed of his ignorance.

"Ah! yes," continued Will-o'-the-wisp. "They are all dead long ago, long ago, long ago."

"You must be very old," said Toto, gravely.

"Old! I am as old as Adam! And I will grow older and older as long as the world lasts."

"Why?" asked Toto.

"Mortals like me!" replied his companion.

"But now, what do you think of this?" As he spoke he pointed to the palace doors, which had swung noiselessly open and now stood ready to admit them.

"My! my!" said Toto, "what a lot of things."

"Didn't I tell you it was a museum?" demanded Will-o'-the-wisp, sharply.

"Yes'm," answered Toto, meekly.

But now they were in the hall, and the little boy forgot to talk in his wonder at the things he saw. The whole place was bright, but Toto only saw one dingy old lamp burning. But how it burned; it seemed to Toto that the sun and moon together could not give so much light.

"Aladdin's lamp," said his guide, noting his wonder. And then he whisked him around from object to object, showing him so many strange and curious things that Toto's little mind was in a sad jumble before he got half through.

There was Cinderella's slipper, reposing daintily on a cushion of cloth-of-gold, and Puss in Boots, nicely stuffed and grinning in a most lifelike manner; there was, too, Little Red Riding Hood's hood, and a bean from the immortal Jack's Beanstalk, and a lock of the Sleeping Beauty's hair; and in a dark corner, quite shut off from the rest, Toto's face grew pale as he looked upon the skin of the wolf that had eaten poor Red Riding Hood, and Blue Beard's wonderful beard, and the picture of the wicked uncle who slew the Babes in the Wood.

These last were so dreadful that the little boy snuggled close up to bis companion, and, indeed, would have been glad to take hold of his hand, only Will-o'-the-wisp never lets any one get near enough to him for that; but Toto felt very glad that this was the last of the show, and breathed much easier when he was out in the friendly moonlight again. Here it was so beautiful, with the sweet-smelling grass sparkling with dew, and

the sky full of soft little clouds, and a sweetvoiced meadow lark, almost at his feet, cooing tenderly to her wakeful birdlings. He felt very tired after his long walk and all his sight-seeing, so sat down on the ground and wondered a little wearily what his guide would do next. He hoped he did not mean to take him anywhere else; he said to himself he did not want to go anywhere else, not even up in the sky to get close to the stars, as he had often wished he might do; no, not even to go sailing down the river all by himself in a boat, with Will-o'-thewisp dancing ahead on the water. He got so tired thinking of what his leader might want him to do that he had to lay his little curly head right down on the grass, and then in just one moment he was fast asleep.

And Will-o'-the-wisp looked at him a little scornfully, and then went sailing across the meadow, flitting in and out among the bushes by the river's side, and stopping every now and then from very wilfulness to peer into some bird's-nest and wake its little dreamers up with the idea that the sun was high in the sky, and they had all overslept themselves, and the best worms and ripest berries had gone to make breakfasts for earlier birds than they. Then he would laugh in his merriest manner, and dart down

close to the water and frighten all the fishes, and quite terrify any sleepless turtle who had ventured to put his head out of his house to see if there were signs of a thunder-shower.

He played his pranks quite regardless of the feelings of any one else, for he is such a strange fellow he has no feelings himself, and carnot imagine how it would seem to have any; but by and by all the little dwellers by the riverside got accustomed to him and went off to sleep again, and so he started back to find Toto; and as he looked down on the pretty sleeper he felt that no other thing in the meadow—bird, or butterfly, or flower—was half so sweet and fair as the little child who lay there asleep. He stared at him so hard and so long that by and by Toto awoke, and then Will-o'-the-wisp quietly left him to find his way back home alone. It was a way he had.

Toto sat up and looked all around, but saw no signs of his friend except one flash of light way down in the edge of the meadow.

He watched the place a long time, expecting to see him return, but, instead, it only grew darker and darker, for the moon and the stars were leaving the sky.

But still he watched, and by and by some rays of golden light spread slowly in the east, and the dandelions woke up, and soft notes of music came floating from every bush and tree.

Toto thought he should not be afraid now to go through the meadow alone, and started off to

find his way home.

All the flowers nodded as he passed, for it seemed to them that they had known him forever, since he had actually been there all night; and so he went happily along, across the fields wet with dew and fragrant with clover, and at last came safely to his own gate. He passed into the house, and up to his own little chamber, and, lying down on his bed, was soon fast asleep again, for the house was much quieter now than the meadow had been.

And hours afterwards, when his mamma came to wake him up, and he tried to tell her of the strange night he had passed, and to describe the wonder of the moon-lit meadow, and the charm of the dawn-flushed fields, she would not believe a word of it. She said he had been dreaming. But Toto knew better, and we know better.

## Queen Termagant and King Curmudgeon.

QUEEN TERMAGANT and King Curmudgeon lived in a great, gloomy castle, situated on a high, barren hill; there was nothing pretty inside of the castle or outside of it, for Queen Termagant did not believe in prettiness, and King Curmudgeon did not dare believe anything that his Queen told him not to believe, and she had told him years ago, when they were first married, not to believe in prettiness above all things. This seemed strange, at first, to the King, for there were so many seemingly pretty things in the world that it took a great deal of faith not to believe in them; but by and by, as he tried very hard, it became quite easy, and indeed he often surprised himself by his eagerness to disbelieve things he had once believed. And so they lived there together very much satisfied with themselves, and very dissatisfied with the

rest of the world, which made them keep away from people as much as possible. No one cared, for no one would have been at all pleased with an invitation to visit this very superior Queen and King, and the few who were obliged to go there and pay their duty to their sovereigns were always glad to get away again and always sorry when the end of the year came and they had to go once more. For although Queen Termagant and King Curmudgeon owned all the country round about, as far as the eye could see, and miles and miles beyond, very few of the people who lived there were their subjects. Most of the dwellers in the land were strangers and foreigners, and these refused to have anything to say to the Queen and King, and would not even take off their hats and bow when they saw them coming in their state carriage.

Many a time had the Queen and King almost determined to take their soldiers and drive these hateful foreigners out of their country entirely, but they were always kept from it by the thought of the money that they got from the rent of the land. Many and many a time had they resolved that at least no new foreigners should come to live there, but it always happened that they could not resist the sight of the gold that the new-comers offered them, and so they let them stay.

Once a year the Lord High Steward went around among the villages collecting the rents, and that was a sad day for some of the villagers, as most of them were very, very poor. The Steward was a very stern and pitiless man, and he had made a cruel law that every one that could not pay his rent must be Killed Alive, and so all the poor people thought of nothing from one year to another save how they might escape this dreadful fate.

Queen Termagant and King Curmudgeon smiled when the Steward told them of the law, and every year, on the first day of spring, all the people who were to be Killed Alive were ordered to be brought to the castle. But as yet no one had ever failed to pay his rent, for the people, though very poor, were also very kind-hearted, and if any one fell sick, or met with other misfortune, and could not save the money, why all his neighbors would join together and pay his rent for him.

But one year the harvest failed. All through the fall and winter the people suffered from cold and hunger, and as the spring came on even the little children began to grow pale and anxiouslooking—all those who were old enough to understand what trouble meant, for their fathers and mothers now talked of nothing else but how to get the money for the Lord High Steward when he came to collect the rents. What little corn could be spared was taken to plant the fields, and then bread became so scarce that the children almost ceased asking for it, and the mothers' faces grew sadder and sadder.

The beautiful spring filled all the land with flowers and songs of birds, but these little starved children had nearly forgotten how to be happy, and paid no attention to the singing robins, and gathered no blossoms in their hands, and, except that they did not shiver with the cold, it seemed almost as dreary as the winter.

But by and by things grew a little brighter. One morning all the children, even the babies, were taken by the parents to look at the broad fields that stretched through all the valley and half up the hillsides. And then the children saw a great marvel, for whereas the land had been before bare and brown and ugly, it was now covered thick with tiny blades of glowing, vivid green, beautiful with the promise they held of the coming, bountiful harvest. The children laughed at the pretty sight, but the mothers bent down and kissed the babies to hide the tears in their eyes.

After that the wild strawberries ripened on the sunny slopes of the hills, and the waters of the

little river were brilliant with the shining fishes that darted hither and thither, and the villagers seeing their wants thus supplied began to take heart.

But as the days crept on towards the first of June their courage fast melted away, for with all their saving and trying they feared there would not be enough money for the rents. Now as the winter had been such an unusually hard one, the Wise Man of the village had proposed that all the money should be given to him, and that he should give each man what he needed for his family every month, so that all might share alike, and no one be hungry while his neighbor had abundance. So as the first of June came near the Wise Man called all the men of the village together, and told them to count the money that was left and see if there were enough for the rents. And they counted it very slowly and gravely, for they knew if there was not enough some of them would be Killed Alive. There was more money than they thought, they had been so careful, but still not enough; for after it was all counted and portioned off into little heaps, they found that there was just one man too many, and one heap less than they needed, and that, in fact, one of them must be Killed Alive. Then there was great trouble and sorrow throughout

the village, such as had never been seen there before; and the Wise Man could not help them out of it, for all he could do was to tell them to draw lots and see who the unfortunate man should be, so that he might prepare himself for his fate. Then he took a bag full of white pebbles and put in it one blue pebble, and said that each man should put in his thumb and forefinger and draw out a pebble, and the one who drew out the blue one would be he who would have to go up to the castle with the Lord High Steward and be Killed Alive. The men drew out the stones with trembling hands, for every man there was a father, with wife and little ones to work for. It so happened that the one who drew out the blue pebble was the Wise Man himself, at which there was a great cry of grief, for he was the one most loved by them all.

Now the Wise Man had one child, a little girl named May, for she had been born in the month of blossoms; and when little May saw the dreadful blue stone in her father's hand, she snatched it away from him, and said that they were very cruel men to send her father up to the castle, and that some one else ought to go. But this did no good; nothing could do any good; the Wise Man must be Killed Alive.

The next day was the first of June, and early

in the morning the Lord High Steward came down to the villages to get his rents, and great was his joy when he found there would be a prisoner to take up to the castle. In vain all the villagers fell on their knees before him and implored him to spare the Wise Man; he only said that he would be very busy that day counting the money, but the next morning would surely come and take the Wise Man away.

All that day the Wise Man spent in giving advice to his neighbors, and telling them how to take care of their farms, so that the harvest might not fail again, and towards night he started out with his family to take a last walk through the valley, and bid farewell to all its pleasant scenes. As they walked along little May ran ahead of her parents, and flitted hither and thither like some butterfly, and after a while she was away ahead of them, and turned into a pleasant, shady road, thinking they would soon follow her. But they had not seen her leave the path in which they were walking, and went on expecting to find her at the home of a friend where they had spoken of resting for a little while.

Little May ran along forgetting to look back, and soon found herself farther from the village than she had ever been before. The road still continued shady, but after a long walk she found that it grew narrower and narrower, and finally ended at a little spring whose waters were almost hidden by clumps of laurel. Being very tired and hot, she made a cup of leaves and refreshed herself with a drink of the sweet, cool water, and then sat down on the moss-covered roots of an old tree, and wondered what she should do. Should she turn back and meet her father and mother, who, she felt sure, were only a little way behind her, or should she wait until they came up to her? She sat so long thinking it over that, before she could decide, she found the place grown almost dark; she jumped up frightened, for in this shady spot it seemed later than it really was, and peered down the path to see if she could catch a glimpse of her parents; but there was no sight or sound of anything save some thrushes flitting from bough to bough, and one big robin singing away as loud as he could.

May closed her little hand tightly around the flowers she had picked, and started quickly down the path. She was so frightened that she felt like crying aloud, but being a brave-hearted child thought better of it, and afterwards was very thankful for it. The path gradually widened into a road, and so fast did May run that in a few moments she was out of the darkest part of the woods, and could see a haze of golden light

shining between the glossy leaves of the trees. Suddenly she stopped, for she was very much puzzled by seeing two roads instead of one. Which one had she come? Which one led back to the village? She could not tell. Both looked exactly alike, but one went up and the other went down, and it was very hard to know what to do. At last she decided that she would take the road that went up, and if that did not take her home she would come back and take the other one.

She had not gone far before she saw that she must have made a mistake, for there was no house or barn to be seen anywhere around. She was on the point of turning back again when, far off up the road, almost where the sky came down and touched the earth, she saw a great heap of glittering stuff that seemed to cover the entire top of the hill.

"That must be gold," said May to herself, and her heart almost stopped beating as she saw it. Why, half that gold, a quarter of it, even a handful, would pay her father's rent and save him from being Killed Alive.

There was only one thought in her mind, as she stood looking at the gleaming hill-top. She must get some of that gold and save her father. And so she immediately began walking up the hill as fast as possible. In a few moments she

found that she had left the shade-trees quite behind her, and that the road was rocky and stony, with not a fern or flower by its side, and not even a blade of grass on the borders of the little mountain-stream that went dashing down towards the valley, as if in a hurry to reach a place where it might wander awhile amid sweet-smelling meadows and blossoming trees.

But little May did not mind the stony road, and hardly missed the flowers, she was so intent on her errand; and the brook took on such pretty colors from the sunset, and flashed and sparkled so beautifully that it quite kept the little girl's spirits up, and really made the journey seem quite pleasant. And so she went on very happily, and was more than half-way up the hill, when she saw two very ugly men come rushing down the road towards her. They were dressed in ugly drab, and had long, ugly red beards, and wore ugly square hats, and as soon as May's eyes fell on them she knew in a moment she must be on the road that led up to the castle, for they were the Queen's out-riders, as every girl and boy in the valley could tell. So, being very much alarmed, and not knowing what else to do, she stood still until they came up to her, and then made a grave little courtesy, as every child was taught to do when the Queen's servants appeared.

In answer to this politeness the uglier man caught her up and set her on his shoulder with her face towards the valley, and then started up the hill at a rapid rate, his companion following and making dreadful faces at the little girl every time she looked at him. In this way she soon reached the castle, the courtyard of which was paved with ugly flag-stones, and then the man placed her on the flags and whistled three times. Immediately the castle-doors opened, and Queen Termagant and King Curmudgeon came out and seated themselves in two ugly wooden chairs. At the sight of their majesties the two servants bowed down to the ground, and did not presume to stand upright again until the Queen and King were seated, and the Queen had held out a wooden sceptre.

Their majesties paid no attention to May at all, and looked quite over her head, as if they did not see her, and the Queen said in a very harsh voice, "Well, and what is it now?"

"If it pleases your Majesty," said the man, "we found this dreadful child trespassing on the Queen's Highway."

At this the King scowled dreadfully and raised a heavy club he held as if to strike the little offender; May looked at him in surprise; she had never before seen a man who was ready to strike a little innocent child; and it seemed very strange to her, quite different from anything she had ever experienced before, and she rubbed her eyes to see if she were really awake or not. But then, to the surprise of the others, Queen Termagant now scowled even more dreadfully, not at May, but at the King; for as she sat there looking at the little girl, it suddenly seemed to her that years and years ago she had known just such a child very well. A child with a sweet, trusting face and wide, innocent eyes, who looked with wonder on all the cruel and selfish things that men found it in their hearts to do. A child whose soul was so pure that it seemed a pity it must ever meet and mingle with anything less lovely than itself. Just such a child, even to the flushed face and crumpled pinafore and bunch of faded flowers in the hot little hand. It may seem strange, but Queen Termagant actually thought she was looking at a picture of herself taken many years before, as she now gazed at little May.

And so it happened that she scowled at the King, and then spoke to May in a voice so different from her usual one that the King and servants hardly knew it. It sounded to May something like the voice of the little spring that gurgled up in the deep, shady woods. And no won-

der, for the Queen was at that moment thinking of that very spring, and wondering, if she were to go to it now, would it sing to her as in the old days? And so her first question to the child was more astonishing to the others than her scowl or voice had been.

"Little one, where did you get the white violets that you hold in your hand?"

And May answered in her sweet, brave way, "Great Queen, I picked them down by the spring in the deep woods." And then she stepped forward, and kneeling down laid the flowers in the Queen's lap, and her Majesty looked at them a long time, as if she saw a great many things there besides a bunch of wilted violets.

"What kind of a place is it down there?" she asked, at length.

"It is a beautiful place, Great Queen; there are trees and flowers and ferns, and there is pretty, bright moss, and the birds sing and sing, and the spring is as clear as the sky."

"And did you make a cup of leaves and drink?" asked the Queen.

"Oh, yes, Great Queen."

"It is the same place," said the Queen; then she took the violets up and looked at them as she had done before. And while she was looking at them there came the sound of a trumpet, and, in a few moments, a great cloud of dust rolled up the hill, and out of the cloud came an ugly chariot drawn by six ugly horses, and down from the seat stepped the Lord High Steward, followed by several men bearing immense bags of gold, which they threw at the Queen's feet.

"These are the rents, your Majesty, and there was one man who could not pay, and he is to be Killed Alive."

At these words King Curmudgeon laughed loud and long, as did Queen Termagant and all the others save little May, whose troubles suddenly came back to her as she remembered that the man to be Killed Alive was her own father. Then she thought she must certainly try and get some of the gold that she had seen shining up on the hill, and started to leave the laughing party and look for the treasure. But at the first motion to go they all stopped laughing, and the Queen said, sharply enough, "What now? what do you mean?"

"Great Queen," said May, "I must go now and look for the gold."

"What gold?" asked the Queen, suspiciously.

"Why, the gold that I saw on top of the hill when I stood down there in the road."

The Queen looked from one man to another. Was it possible that they had been hiding some

of her gold away? Were they, then, dishonest? She even looked at the King as if she suspected him, but he was so busy in scowling at May that he did not see the look; and finally she looked at the little girl. "What do you want of gold?" she demanded.

"If you please, Great Queen, I want it to pay my father's rent, for he is the man who is to be Killed Alive," and as May said the cruel words her brave little heart lost all its courage and she began crying bitterly.

The Queen looked puzzled and half sorry, for somehow the sight of this child had made her feel queerly. She had an odd, uneasy fluttering about her heart which reminded her of the twitchings of the little half-drowned birds she used to find under the hedge-rows, and nurse carefully back to life; and once or twice she had felt a strange desire to kiss some one, perhaps the King, perhaps the little girl. So she looked puzzled, and all the others looked puzzled too, as was quite right, since the Queen set the example; and the Lord High Steward looked so very puzzled that it attracted the Queen's attention and she asked him what it meant; but he only shook his head, looking more puzzled than ever, and said not a word, for, indeed, he did not know what to say. But the Queen, who kept feeling queerer

and queerer, was so very uncomfortable that she felt she must end it in some way. So she commanded the Lord High Steward to carry all the gold away and lock it up in the tower, for fear she would be tempted to give some of it to May; and then she ordered one of the servants to bring the little girl some bread and molasses, for somehow she couldn't help feeling sorry for her. But May only wept the more, and utterly refused to take the bread and molasses. And then the Queen felt queerer than ever; for, as wise men tell us, tiny, delicate plants are often found inside of hard, rough rocks; so inside of the Queen's heart a little dainty flower was springing, unfolding its petals faster and faster as May's tears fell, just as the white violets down by the spring unfold their leaves to catch the morning dew, and so fast did the little flower grow that by the time the Steward came back her heart was no longer harder than gold, as it had been for many a year, but, on the contrary, was almost filled with beauty and sweetness.

But the Lord High Steward had made up his mind, while in the tower, that he would put an end to May's crying as soon as he got back to the courtyard. So as soon as he appeared he told her, in a very gruff voice, to stop her crying and go straight home, and tell her father to be

ready for him at seven o'clock the next morning. And May was so frightened at his terrible voice that she did stop crying, but, instead of leaving the courtyard, she only crept quite close up to the Queen and hid her face in her dress. Being a little child, she could see that the Queen's heart had changed, and knew that she need no longer fear her.

But the Steward was shocked at her conduct, and bade her come away from her Majesty instantly, or else be Killed Alive the next day with her father. He thought this terrible sentence would please the Queen very much, and, therefore, he was astonished when, instead of smiling and nodding pleasantly at him, the Queen stood up in her grand way, and looked at him with eyes filled with disgust and displeasure. Even in her moments of greatest anger he had never been so afraid of her as he was now, and he stepped back quickly and, bowing very low, begged her pardon.

Then the Queen stooped down and kissed little May, and said, sweetly, "You need not cry any more, I have resolved to pardon your father."

But at these words the Steward grew very pale and felt that he must speak even if it cost him his life. "Great Queen," he said, humbly kneeling as he spoke, "indeed, that cannot be; the man cannot be pardoned, for he is a for-eigner."

And now it was the Queen's turn to grow pale, for it was the great law of the land that no foreigner should ever be pardoned. It was a very cruel law, and had been made hundreds of years before by Queen Termagant's ancestors, who were very savage men and delighted in seeing people Killed Alive; but clearly it was the law, and how could it be set aside? The Councillors who made it were still living, for in that country Councillors lived to be a thousand years old, and if the law were set aside they might come and take the Queen away and put her in a dungeon. So what was to be done? The Queen thought and thought a long time, and at last she said, "Well, I would rather be put in a dungeon than to do anything so cruel and unjust." And at these words the Lord High Steward fainted away, for he was sure the Queen had gone crazy.

They brought him too by cramming bread and molasses down his throat, and as soon as he was able to sit up the Queen repeated what she had said, and added that she was determined to do it in spite of all the Councillors that ever lived.

The Lord High Steward now was fully convinced that the Queen had gone crazy and that

he must humor her whims. So he gravely proposed an amendment.

"A what?" said the Queen.

"An amendment, your Majesty; the man may be pardoned, but only for a year; if he still is unable to pay at the end of the year then let him be Killed Alive. In the meantime the Councillors need know nothing about it."

Now this did not suit the Queen, for she would rather have had her pardon free and generous as a Queen's should be, but she reflected that if she insisted on her way she might really be put in a dungeon, and then the poor people in the valley might fare much worse with her successor; for, somehow, all at once, she began to feel very tenderly towards the dwellers in the valley, and to wish she might protect them as a great and rich Queen would be able to, instead of oppressing them, as she had always done before. And so for their sake she agreed to what the Lord High Steward said, and gave up her own way for the first time in her life.

The Lord High Steward was so pleased at this that he immediately proposed another plan.

"Your Majesty, he said, firmly, "I have no doubt the Wise Man will at once leave the valley when he hears of your kindness; and so, in order to keep him here and so secure the rent,

it will be necessary to make this child a prisoner."

"Nonsense!" said the Queen.

But the Steward said it must be so or he would tell the Councillors. And, in fact, he would have been glad of a chance to do that, for having quite made up his mind that the Queen was crazy, he thought it would be a very good thing if she were put in a dungeon and he himself made King.

The Queen had listened so many years to the advice of this bad man that now she found it very hard to oppose him; so she said at last that the child should be kept at the castle for the year. But she did not mean that the little girl should be a prisoner—far from that, she meant she should be as free as the birds—but she did not tell the Lord High Steward that, and it was just as well she did not.

And now a very strange thing happened at the castle; for instead of liking ugly things the Queen began to want only beautiful things around her, and so it came about she could not bear to have little May out of her sight, for she was the most beautiful thing in the whole country. So everywhere that the child went the Queen went too. and by this means the Lord High Steward was satisfied that the little prisoner was well guard-

ed, even if it were only by a crazy Queen. And the days and months slipped by and the summer passed, and a beautiful harvest was gathered in by the happy villagers. And little May, up at the castle, was very happy too, for the Queen was most kind and loving, and the little girl felt quite at home; and when the first of June came round again and the Wise Man came to pay his debts and ask for his little daughter, Queen Termagant had grown so fond of the child that she begged she might stay a little longer. And the Wise Man, feeling grateful to her Majesty, allowed May to remain at the castle, and she stayed there so long this time that it would have seemed quite strange for her to go away. Many Junes came and went; but still she stayed on; and in the meantime so many changes happened at the castle that a stranger would scarcely have known it. For the birds, attracted by a child's merry laughter, had often paused in passing by, and had dropped here and there a seed or berry, and the wind, not to be behindhand, had wafted thither its generous gifts, and the little brook gave freely of its crystal stores, until at last one might see slender, waving ferns and starry daisies and wideeyed violets; and later on the birds came and built their nests in willows and maples—the happy robin and saucy cat-bird and sweet-voiced

thrush and flaming oriole—and the ruby throat of the humming-bird flashed in the sunshine, and the busy brown bees hummed musically as they sipped the honey from the fair wild roses. And so the whole place was full of beauty and fragrance and songs of birds. And the little girl who had brought it all there had grown to be a very sweet and winsome maiden, and when she sat by the Queen's side in the beautiful carriage drawn by six magnificently caparisoned horses, and the out-riders dressed in scarlet and gold blew their silver trumpets and warned every one to make way for her Majesty and the Lady May, why it seemed to every one that she was a real princess, and not the little girl who had been born in one of the humblest dwellings of the village. And no one wondered when the Queen proclaimed a great feast and showed the Wise Man's daughter to all the great lords and ladies, and said that she had chosen her to be Queen after her.

And then, wondering what the Councillors would say, she sent the message to them in due time; but the Lord High Steward, when he arrived there, found that the thousand years had already expired, and that the Councillors had all turned into dead leaves and blown out of the window. And so he hastened back, and, meeting Lady May on the very spot where the Queen's

servants had first found her, told her the wonderful news. And, looking up to the hill-top, she saw it gleaming goldenly, just as it had done years before, and she went towards it gladly; not for the gold, for she knew now that that had only been the palace windows flashing in the sunlight, but for the good deed she was to do. And, entering the castle, she took down the heavy book of laws from its resting-place and tore out a whole chapter, and no one in that country has ever been Killed Alive from that day to this.

# The Happy Country.

ONCE upon a time there was a little girl who had many reasons for being unhappy. Because it rained; because she had her lessons to learn; because she had to practise, and take her dancinglesson; because it did not snow; because her birthday-cake was eaten up; because all her pet kittens either died or grew up; and, greatest reason of all, because all her dresses had to be let down. All her other troubles were as nothing compared to this last one; for the others might change, or go away entirely. But her dresses would have to be let down several times a year until she grew up, and she felt she could not bear it with patience.

She often told herself that once a year would not have been so bad, but to have the same old trouble every spring, summer, autumn, and winter was quite unendurable.

Her friends tried to reason with her, but she

hated reasoning even more than having dresses let down, and so that was no comfort, and she just continued thinking that the world was very badly managed, and that children had the worst of everything. So on this day she stood looking out of the window, feeling very dismal, and wishing for the thousandth time that, if she had to live in such a world, she could at least either be a midget or a grown-up lady, and so escape all the miseries of childhood.

It rained, rained, rained, as if it were never going to stop, and there in the nursery sat her nurse, letting down her thick dresses, because the cold weather was coming.

She would not have minded the rain in the least if she could only have gone out in it; but that was not allowed, and she could do nothing but stand at the window and watch the big raindrops chase one another over the panes, or look down into the street at the little puddles forming between the stones, or at the umbrellas that moved along in a steady stream, completely hiding the people they were sheltering, and looking like great black birds, all wings, and with no heads or tails or legs. She stood there a long time, and then suddenly decided that she would be naughtier than she had ever been in her life before, and go out in the rain any how.

She was so frightened at herself for thinking of such a thing that she did not wait a moment, for fear some punishment would follow, but slipped into the closet, put on her waterproof and rubbers, and, keeping out of nurse's sight, got safely out of the room, and was in the street in no time.

She had no umbrella, for she hated them, and liked to feel the rain pat down on her face, and in a moment she had quite forgotten all about her naughtiness, and ran along as happily as if she were the best little girl in the world.

She ran swiftly, out towards the country, for she knew she could find there larger puddles, stickier mud, and wetter grass than ever could be found in the city, and, as her house stood near the town limits, she was soon trudging through country lanes, past brown pasture-lands, where the cows looked up as if astonished to see her, and over and under hedgerows drenched and glistening, for she had made up her mind that, for once in her life, she would walk where and how she pleased.

She did not go into the road once if she could help it, but ran in and out among the rows of corn-stalks, caught the low limbs of trees and gave herself shower-baths, splashed right through the largest puddles she could find, and even waded, with her shoes and stockings on, across a little brook that she found in her way.

The late birds, who sat shivering in the almost leafless trees, ready to start southward as soon as the storm ceased, were amazed to see this dauntless little figure go singing along beneath them, and shook themselves to see if they were not dreaming, or if the world had not turned topsy-turvy. A good-natured squirrel, admiring her pluck, threw her the largest nut of his collection, and a friendly cat from the farm-house across the fields rubbed its wet sides against her, and purred as if recognizing a kindred spirit; and, being in such an amiable mood, she actually caressed the animal, though she generally detested cats as being only grown-up kittens.

Amid such harmonious surroundings and companions the time passed so quickly that, before she knew it, the little runaway had travelled far into the country, and found herself in quite a strange place.

It still rained, and around her the fields seemed to stretch out for miles and miles with no house or barn in sight; but she did not mind this, for she was so tired of houses she felt she never wanted to see one again.

On she went very happily for several hours; but finally she began to grow a little tired, and to wish for something to eat; so she sat down to rest in a tuft of tall grass, and made a little lunch of some orange-peel, raisins, and candy that she found in her pocket. This refreshed her very much, and she started off again, wondering if it could be growing dark; for in a little while the whole plain grew so sombre that she could scarcely see. But she soon saw that the darkness was caused by the shadow of a high mountain, which rose up so suddenly that it looked like a great stone wall reaching from the earth to the sky.

She had always wanted to climb steep hills and mountains, with no one near to insist on holding her hand, and now started up the almost perpendicular wall in the briskest manner. She found it very easy climbing, as she knew she should, and in a short time was at the very summit, and found that she was so high up she could see nothing at all when she looked back but some dark, heavy clouds that the wind was driving swiftly across the fields.

But when she looked down on the other side she found that she could see quite clearly, and the place below looked so inviting that she determined to go thither at once; and as she thought that this would probably be the best opportunity she would ever have of rolling down a whole mountain, she just lay down and rolled to the very bottom, and got up none the worse for it.

As soon as she was again on her feet she saw that she was surrounded by a number of children, who were all playing merrily in the rain. They were all as wet as possible and as happy as possible, and crowded around her with shouts of greeting, asking her name and where she came from and how long she could stay.

Thereupon she told them that her name was Fancy, that she had come from a place where children were always miserable, and that she meant to stay until she got tired of the place and wanted a change. At this they all looked at one another, and laughed more merrily than ever, for they had once lived in a place where children were always miserable, and had come to this new home with the same intention of going away again some time as Fancy had.

But they had never gone away, and never meant to, they said, for the name of this land was the Happy Country, and no one who came to it ever wanted to leave. Fancy wondered if they had to have their dresses let down as often as she did, and looked for some little girl of her own size to ask the question of; but, to her surprise, there was no one there just her height. There were girls taller and girls shorter, but no

one exactly as tall as she. This seemed so strange to her, among such a large number of girls, that, in her astonishment, she quite forgot all about dresses being let down, and began to examine her companions more closely.

She saw that they were dressed in all sorts of queer ways and fashions, looking as different as possible from any children she had ever seen before. Some wore quantities of jewelry, rings, earrings, bracelets, bangles, and necklaces abounding in the greatest profusion. Most of them had their hair hanging straight down their backs, and many wore court-trains of silk and velvet; all the dresses had immense pockets in them, which were filled with candy and nuts, and which the generous owners lavishly bestowed upon Fancy; and every child had a pet of some kind, pugdogs being most plentiful, though there were a number of canaries, and not a few mud-turtles. which reposed upon their mistresses' velvet robes in the most affectionate manner. This seemed a new and blessed state of things to Fancy, and she looked at the group of happy children until her eyes grew tired.

Then she began questioning them, and found out that it was unknown in that country to wish for anything and not get it. Upon hearing this she immediately wanted to wish for something, but was so dazed by the thought of getting anything she could ask for that it was some time before she could collect her thoughts sufficiently to make up a wish.

Finally she remembered that she had always wanted a doll that would answer her when she spoke to it, and not just say stupidly, "Papa, mamma," when she squeezed it.

No sooner had this thought passed through her mind than she found in her arms the loveliest doll imaginable. She hugged it close in her joy, and asked it if it really belonged to her. At which the doll smiled and said "Yes," and was obliging enough to keep up a conversation of some minutes without any signs of needing to be wound up, or any hint that it would ever run down. This gift so delighted Fancy that she immediately wished it would stop raining so she could play house.

Instantly she found herself whisked away to a beautiful dry lawn, where the grass was as green as in midsummer, and on which the sun was shining as brightly as if it had never rained in the world.

She found some of the little girls had come there with her, who, with a number of new ones, formed a party large enough to play house in the most elaborate manner, and thereupon Fancy wished for a doll-house. In a moment one stood there, large enough for her to go in at the door, and having an up-stairs, down-stairs, and cellar. Then she set the table, and dined on real plumcake and chocolate *éclairs*, and drank real tea and coffee just as strong as she liked.

All the other little girls had doll-houses of different shapes and patterns to suit their fancy, and one strange child, who always wanted things unlike the others, ate real mud-pies and quantities of peach-pit turnovers, and was never, as Fancy found out later on, any the worse for it.

As soon as they grew tired of playing house, they wandered over the lawn to a beautiful lake with a fine level beach, upon which they ran up and down until they were so warm that they all jumped right into the water like so many fishes, and after plunging around for some time climbed up on some rocks in the middle of the lake and sat there chatting until they were quite rested.

Fancy thought this the most delightful thing in the world, for she had always wanted a chance to plunge into cool, sparkling water when hot and tired, but had never been allowed to do so before.

But she noticed that every now and then some child would disappear suddenly, and as this happened once or twice when she was talking to the very child that thus left them, she asked what it meant. Her companions told her that this was because the children took a sudden fancy for something else, as children often do, and that probably those who had been there a few moments before were now playing some other game, or eating lunch, or driving, or walking, or doing whatever they might choose.

Fancy thought this idea such a splendid one that she immediately wished herself lying in a hammock, as she felt a little tired, and in a moment found herself swinging to and fro, in the most comfortable hammock she had ever been in. When the sun came in her eyes, she wished the leaves of the trees to move and shade her, which of course they did, and so she lay there for an hour, and drank lemonade through a long straw as often as she liked, for she was thirsty as well as tired, and wanted as much of her favorite beverage as she could drink.

And in this pleasant manner she went from one thing to another until the day was passed, learning so many strange things and enjoying so many new pleasures that when night came she was actually glad to go to bed, although she was told she need not hurry in the least, and, in fact, could sit up all night if she wished, or if she preferred she could lie down anywhere and go to sleep.

But she thought she would rather go to bed as usual this time, and sit up some night when she felt less tired; and so, in no time, she was conveyed to a charming little room and lay down very happy and contented. On feeling something hard under her head, she raised her pillow and found there a neat pile of school-books, and, on asking what this meant, she was informed that in this delightful manner the children of the Happy Country learned all they knew of books. Fancy was perfectly satisfied with this explanation, and soon fell asleep with the joyous assurance that in the morning her lessons would all be learned, and she would be much wiser than she was on going to bed.

The next day brought new delights, and Fancy found that the resources of this wonderful country were indeed unlimited. All games became as real as lessons and practising had been in the old life, and nothing happened to make any child discontented or unhappy.

When they played — London Bridge — and Fancy was asked to choose between a gold house and jewelled furniture, and a silver sleigh with twenty ponies, she found, on choosing the latter, that a real little silver sleigh and twenty live ponies stood at her side.

This, of course, made her forget all about the

game, and she had to wish for snow in order to use her new gift.

Winter came right away, the pines were loaded with snow, and it crunched merrily under the ponies' feet as they dashed along in high glee.

And so it was with all pastimes. Hammocks and swings moved of their own accord, and every girl at the same time could play fox and geese in jumping rope, for the rope turned of itself, and no one had to take turns. Sleds flew back uphill after their owners had ridden down, and skates went off and on without an effort; while balls, dolls, and tea-sets remained forever new, and mending-cement was unknown.

And as the days passed Fancy found that even greater things than these came to pass, for in this obliging climate, where it snowed or rained or shone just as people wanted, and one could gather violets one minute and play snowball in the same spot the next, the little girl learned that letting down dresses was a thing unknown, for the reason that no child there grew at any time excepting on the night before her next birthday; and as even then the growing all went on during sleep, no one suffered the least inconvenience from it; and the birthday cake, which lasted the entire year, never diminished, but was always large enough to admit of having several pieces

all round, no matter how many tea-parties there were during the year.

In this country, too, the kittens always stayed little, and thus Fancy found that one by one her troubles left her, and she became a perfectly happy child. She remained in this land until she grew up; but then had to go home again, as it was against the law for any one to live there but children. But she returned to her old home very willingly, for she was quite sure that grown people never had any trouble. If she ever found out that this was a mistake, she never told any one, but bravely bore things that could not be helped, and once in a while forgot all her present life, for every now and then she would meet some one she had known as a child, and then everything else would be forgotten while they talked over the scenes and delights of the everto-be-remembered Happy Country of their childhood.

## The Dismal Land.

Very different from this was the experience of a little boy who also went travelling one day to see if he could not find a better country to live in than his own.

This little boy, whose name was Prettel, ought to have been very happy, for he had everything in the world to make him so. He had a beautiful home, beautiful clothes, beautiful toys, and hosts of friends; but he cared for none of them, and was always fretting for something else, and when he got that, he still wanted something else, and so it went on continually.

And so one day, being very tired of everything old, he thought he would try and find something that would please him always and of which he would never weary.

He started off without saying even good-bye, for he had said it so many times in his life that he felt as though he never cared to say it again. At first everything went very pleasantly, for he had only to walk along a nice shady road that went straight ahead without turning. This he liked very much, for he was very tired of turning, and had made up his mind never to do it again.

But, by and by, he came to a river. He looked up and down and around, but he saw he must either go in to the river or turn, and so in he

went.

He was a very good swimmer, and felt no fear, but no sooner had he touched the water, than it all turned to mud and mire, and he had all he could do to flounder through it to the other side.

As he scrambled up the slippery bank, he saw a number of children standing there watching him curiously; but he paid no attention to them, for he could think of nothing but his clothes, which were covered with mud and so ragged that he could not believe they were the same ones he had on when he plunged into the river.

The children saw his dismayed looks and came closer around him.

"No matter," said they, "we are all ragged here, and nobody minds."

And as Prettel looked from one to another, he confessed to himself that he had never seen such a ragged set before; and yet each one had some sign about it that showed it was not simply a common, neglected child.

One little fellow wore a gold crown, which showed he was a king; another carried a beautiful sword, with a duke's monogram engraved on it; one little girl wore a necklace of pearls, because she was a great princess; and still another had on the satin slippers in which she had danced at the Queen's birthday fête.

Prettel looked at these things in astonishment and then surveyed his own rags, but could find no sign of his old life until he raised his hand to his head, on which still rested his little velvet cap with the silver arrow in it, which showed that he belonged to the family of the prince's archers.

He tried to pull the cap off and throw it to the ground; but he could not, for it stuck fast, and the little boys and girls only laughed at his efforts.

"It will never come off," said they, as he tugged away at it. "It will never come off while you stay here."

"Why not?" demanded Prettel.

"Because this is the Dismal Land," they answered, "and nothing ever happens that you want."

Prettel looked at them in amazement. Was

there really such a land, and had he wandered into it?

"How did you all get here?" he asked at length.

"Oh, we just walked straight ahead," they replied.

Prettel was silent for a moment; he began to wish just a little that he had not been so determined not to turn.

"Did you all cross the river?" he asked, won-deringly.

And then he found out that he was the only one there that had crossed that particular river. Some had crossed mountains, some had wandered through forests, some had toiled over deserts, others had crossed seas, and a few had come by the paths of the whirlwind and tempest, but all had reached the Dismal Land at last by keeping straight ahead and never turning.

Prettel thought this very queer, but, after all, he said to himself, it was different from anything he had ever seen before, and its newness rather pleased him.

He began to think he might have some fun here after all. He looked at the boys cheerfully.

"Let's play marbles," he suggested, and plunged his hands into his ragged pockets. The boys shook their heads; but each one drew out a handful of marbles and offered them to Prettel. He took them eagerly, for he had never seen such beauties before; they were of all colors, and among them were the most beautiful alleys and agates of the rarest kinds. But as he placed them in the ring one by one, they turned to ugly little balls of mud and rolled away. This was quite a shock to Prettel, and he began to doubt if he should have a good time after all; but still he made up his mind to try all his games one after the other and see if he could not find one that would do instead of marbles.

He tried making a kite, which, when finished, was the finest one he had ever made; but when he tried to fly it, it sailed off up in the sky, and positively refused to come down again.

Then he attempted to play ball, but the bat kept flying around after the ball, until both disappeared in the woods.

And when they all tried a game of hide-andseek, the trees and bushes and rocks, behind which they hid, all vanished just at the most exciting moment, and so there was no fun in it.

When he wanted to play quiet games, he met with the same trouble. The soap-bubbles would not blow; the backgammon-board walked right away, though several of the children tried their best to hold it, and his tin soldiers fell upon one another with great slaughter, and were broken into small bits before his eyes. Books, tops, dissected maps, and puzzles of all kinds vanished in the same provoking way—even the magic lantern dancing away after it had shown only the most hideous pictures in place of those he expected to see.

At last Prettel gave up in despair and did not try to play any more. And as soon as the other children saw this, they told him they must be going, and that he must go with them.

"But where are you going?" asked Prettel.

But they said they didn't know, only it was the law of the land that they should keep moving straight ahead all the time.

Prettel said he would not go, and declared he meant to go back across the river again and leave the Dismal Land to those who liked it. But when he looked around, he found that the river too had disappeared, and in its place were some high, rocky mountains that went straight up from the ground, and were too steep for any one to think of climbing.

So Prettel went on with the rest, and a very dismal party they were, for no one felt like laughing or joking, and playing was impossible. They travelled all day over the roughest of roads, and when night came they seemed as far from any place as ever.



" She looked out of the mindom, feeling very dismul."



At last the road stopped quite abruptly, and the children told Prettel that was a sign their day's walk was over, and then they all sat down on the ground too wearied to care whether they had chairs or not.

Prettel was the last one to sit down, for he had a faint hope that by going on he might reach home that same night, but the others told him there would be no use in trying, for when the road disappeared in that manner they never saw it again until the next morning.

When they were all seated they heard a great rustling and noise in the woods close by, and in another moment a Griffin came out to give them their suppers.

He went first to the King and then to the Duke and then to the Princess and so on according to their rank, and asked what they would have for supper. But he did not ask Prettel, and his little neighbor whispered to him that it was because he was the latest comer.

Prettel noticed that when the Griffin asked them what they wanted, they all answered "Anything," and did not seem to care whether they had a nice meal or not.

When the Griffin brought in the supper he served the one of lowest rank first and the King last, for that was the custom of the country, and

he gave them the queerest things to eat that Prettel had ever seen.

The King had ground peanut shells, the Duke had peach-pits, the Princess had burned crusts, and the Queen's Maid of Honor had to be satisfied with pumpkin seeds.

But they all ate without a murmur, which Prettel thought very strange, for he meant to have a good supper, since the Griffin so kindly gave him his choice.

When it was his turn, therefore, he ordered chicken, jelly, ice-cream, nuts, and raisins, the very thought of which made him so hungry that he could hardly wait till the Griffin came back with it.

But finally he appeared with a large tray heaped up with all the goodies that Prettel had ordered, and the little boy's eyes sparkled at the sight.

But when he went to taste of the chicken—whiff—how it flew away with the ice-cream and jelly after it, and the nuts and raisins struggling to see which could get off the tray first! and in a moment's time Prettel perceived that he must make a supper of bones, mud, pebbles, strings, and acorns if he made any at all.

He felt very sad, but ate a few bones, as that was the best he could do, and as all the rest had

finished the Griffin carried away the dishes and then came back to give everybody a big pinch for a good-night kiss.

"Where do all the things go to?" asked Prettel, as the Griffin disappeared for the last time.

"Oh, they go to the Happy Country," was the answer, "where all the children have everything they want."

Prettel sighed deeply. But he was too weary to ask any more questions, and in another moment was fast asleep.

He slept very well, although he had only the ground for his bed, for the long and exciting day had made him unusually tired.

In the morning the Griffin appeared as soon as the sun was up, gave each child a box on the ear for good-morning, and then brought them their breakfast of hot peppers.

Prettel was not asked what he would have this time, and ate the peppers without saying a word.

As soon as they had finished their meal they started off again on their journey, for the road had reappeared while they were eating.

The Griffin disappeared in the woods, and when Prettel asked if he would come and give them their dinners, he was told that people never had dinner in the Dismal Land, and were thankful even to get two meals a day.

The little boy thought that this was a climax to all his troubles, for he always had a great appetite for his dinner, and he trudged wearily along, feeling very disconsolate, for his heart was very heavy. His head ached badly, too, from the box on the ear that he had received, but when he happened to mention it the pain became so great that he could not endure it, and was thankful when one of the children told him that it could never be any better until he ceased talking about it.

He found that this was the way with everything. If he said he was tired, he immediately became more weary than ever, and if he felt sick he only grew worse if he spoke of it; and as the days passed he found that it was best to say very little about anything, and so grew as silent as the other children.

But hard as these things were, the Griffin was his worst trouble, for he seemed to know what a child was thinking of, and did not wait to hear the spoken words.

And once when Prettel was wishing to himself that he could have some nice cakes for his breakfast the Griffin brought him rusty nails, and again, when he cried because he was tired of sleeping on the bare ground, he found himself lying on thorns and thistles; and this was all the Griffin's work, and there was no escaping him in any way.

If he wished for the rain to stop, it suddenly turned to hail, and beat down upon him in the angriest manner; and if he dared to say that the hot sun made his head ache, it would straightway blaze down upon him in the fiercest manner; and so there was no comfort to be had out of anything.

And so the days went on drearily enough, and Prettel wondered if things would ever change.

Once in a while as they journeyed through deep forests he fancied he heard voices singing and laughing, and when he asked where the sounds came from, he was told that it was the children of the Happy Country playing at their games, and one day, when he caught a glimpse of some fair, green meadows away in the distance, he learned that in those pleasant playgrounds merry children roamed, whose homes were also in the Happy Country; but these sights and sounds only made Prettel feel more wretched than ever, and he began to wish he had never heard about any place but the Dismal Land, where he seemed destined to spend his days.

But one day something happened which gave him a little hope.

As they sat waiting for the Griffin to bring them their supper, he suddenly appeared a little earlier than usual, and with him was a beautiful woman. This was the Queen of the Happy Country, who loved all children so well that she could not bear to see any of them miserable.

Twice a year she came to the Dismal Land and gave them all good-night kisses, and bread and milk for their suppers; and she would have done a great deal more if the Griffin had only let her, but he would not.

The Queen kept account of all the children in the Dismal Land, and she knew right away that Prettel was a new-comer, and so she gave him an extra kiss when the Griffin was not looking, and told him not to despair, for one day something nice might happen.

This made him feel a great deal happier than he ever thought it would be possible to feel in the Dismal Land, and for the next few days he travelled along the weary road quite bravely. He even had the courage to ask what the Queen meant; and the children told him that once in a while their path was crossed by roads that led to the Happy Country, and that if they came to one of these just at nightfall, when it was hard to distinguish one road from another, sometimes one of their number would wander off in the dusk down the wrong path, and so reach the Happy Country.

This news seemed wonderful to Prettel, and he at once determined to be on the lookout for new roads. But, although he peered through the twilight evening after evening, he could see nothing but their own stony road going straight ahead, or ending abruptly when it was supper-time.

At last he grew discouraged and said to the Duke that he did not believe there were any other roads; and the Duke replied perhaps there were not, for he was discouraged too.

But one night when they sat down to supper they all gave a startled glance around and looked at one another in a frightened manner, for the King was gone, and only his little golden crown lay in his accustomed place. They peered into the shadows to see if he might not still be coming, but they could see nothing; and presently the Griffin appeared in a terrible rage, for he always felt it in the air when a child was gone; and giving them each an extra hard pinch, said that they should have no supper, and only ashes for their breakfast for three days.

His ill-humor lasted for a week, but the children did not mind, for they were willing to suffer it so long as the King had really gotten safely away, and there was a chance for them all.

And then such another long weary time went by that they almost forgot the King, and were fast becoming discouraged again, when one night the Duke disappeared, leaving his sword to show that he had really been among them; and this gave them all hope again.

Then the Princess left them next, and the Griffin was so much more enraged than usual that he chewed up her satin slippers, and broke the King's crown and the Duke's sword into a thousand pieces.

And so, one by one, the weary little band disappeared and travelled down the pleasant paths that led them to happiness, and Prettel was left all alone with the Griffin, who grew fiercer and uglier every day, and starved him more than ever.

He now found that hard as his lot had been before it was still made endurable by companionship; but now he grew so lonely and heart-sick that he was forced to speak to the Griffin once in a while just for the sake of hearing his own voice.

But at every time he spoke the Griffin only answered by giving him chestnut burs to eat, and he sank into silence at last and went on his lonely way day after day without uttering a word. His loneliness made him feel so disconsolate that he began to grow discouraged again, and night after night would sit down wearily as the road stopped without thinking of anything but his misery.

He even ceased to look around in the dusk to see if any other road was in sight, and so one day when he felt unusually tired, he was surprised to notice that the stones, over which he had plodded so many weary months, had changed to soft grass, and that beautiful flowers were growing by the side of the road and nodding brightly to him through the slowly gathering twilight.

He thought he had fallen asleep and was dreaming, and expected every moment to hear the Griffin's rough voice wake him to his supper of bones or pebbles; but as he went along and the place only grew pleasanter he gave himself a shake, and putting his hand to his head found that his little velvet cap was gone, and that he was really on the way to the Happy Country at last.

His joy was so great that for a few moments he could only stand still and look around him in wonder. But at last he started on again with such gladness in his heart that he ran all the way, and reached the Happy Country before the twilight was over.

The Queen met him with the sweetest of kisses, and all his late companions crowded around to welcome him.

And straightway his life became so pleasant

that he quite forgot that he had ever been to the Dismal Land, for it only seemed like an ugly dream. But before he had quite forgotten it he asked the Queen, one day, why some children reached the Happy Country and some reached the Dismal Land when they went from home. But the Queen was not so wise as she was beautiful and kind, and so, although she thought a long time, she could only say that it all depended upon which road they took; and with this answer Prettel had to be content.

THE END.

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